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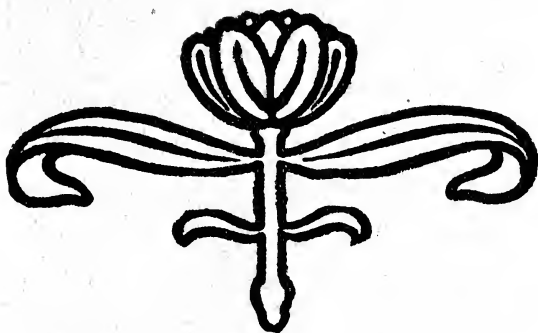
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HARTLEY MANNERS

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THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR



A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

WALTER H. BAKER & Co., BOSTON

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No. 5 Hamilton Place, Boston, Massachusetts

THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR

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The House Next Door

THE CHARACTERS IN THE COMEDY

The Cotswold Family

SIR JOHN COTSWOLD, *baronet.*
MARGARET, *his wife.*
ULRICA, *his daughter.*
CECIL, *his son.*
VING, *his servant.*
CAPT. *the HON. CLIVE TREVOR.*

The Jacobson Family

SIR ISAAC JACOBSON, *M. P.*
REBECCA, *his wife.*
ESTHER, *his daughter.*
ADRIAN, *his son.*
MAXIMILIAN, *his servant.*
WALTER LEWIS, *musical agent.*



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THE SCENES IN THE COMEDY

ACT I

SCENE.—*Morning room in Sir John Cotswold's house in the Cotswold Park Estate, Kensington, London.*

ACT II

SCENE.—*Drawing-room in Sir Isaac Jacobson's house. Next Door. The same afternoon.*

ACT III

SCENE.—*Same as Act I. Three days later.*

*First produced at the Gaiety Theatre, New York City,
Monday April 12, 1909, with the following company:*

The Cotswold Family

SIR JOHN COTSWOLD . . .	Mr. J. E. Dodson.
LADY COTSWOLD . . .	Miss Ruth Chester.
CECIL COTSWOLD . . .	Mr. W. J. Kelley.
ULRICA COTSWOLD . . .	Miss Mabel Roebuck.
VINING . . .	Mr. A. T. Hendon.
CAPT. <i>the</i> HON. CLIVE TREVOR	Mr. W. H. Sams.

The Jacobson Family

SIR ISAAC JACOBSON, M. P., .	Mr. Thomas Findlay.
LADY JACOBSON . . .	Miss Eleanor Moretti.
ADRIAN JACOBSON . . .	Mr. Regan Hughston.
ESTHER JACOBSON . . .	Miss Farnia Marinoff.
MAXIMILIAN . . .	Mr. Charles Diem.
WALTER LEWIS . . .	Mr. Herbert Standing.

To
J. E. DODSON
In grateful appreciation

J. HARTLEY MANNERS
December, 1911

The House Next Door

ACT I

SCENE.—*The action passes in the morning room of SIR JOHN COTSWOLD'S house. It is somewhat sparsely furnished, but everything in the room is old, massive, dignified in its simplicity. An old straight-backed piano down R., open, a piece of music on the rest. Chesterfield R. C. Writing bureau at back, R. C. Breakfast table L. C., partly laid. Heavy door at back, C.; deeply recessed door L.; smaller door down R. A large, old-fashioned window, L., lights the room, and through it can be seen the foliage of the railed-in gardens, all that is left of the once famous Cotswold Park. It is morning on a day in late spring and a faint, watery sunlight is struggling in through the partly opened windows.*

[*As the curtain rises, the door-bell rings and VINING, a white-haired, subdued, precise servant, enters with basket of flowers, L., puts it in front of side-board, then hurries out C., leaving the door open. As he disappears, the door R. opens and ULRICA, a fair, Saxon, beautiful girl of twenty-two, enters anxiously; walks over to door L. and listens apprehensively. VINING reenters carrying more flowers, bouquets, wreaths, etc.*

ULRICA.

[*By door L.*] Good-morning, Vining.

VINING.

Good-morning, miss. [*Bringing her flowers, etc.*] Mr. Cecil's servant from the opera just brought these.

[*Hands flowers.*]

ULRICA.

Oh, how lovely! [*Takes violets and large wreath.*] I was so afraid the ringing would disturb my father.

VINING.

So was I, miss. I hurried as quickly as I could.

ULRICA.

[*Burying her face in the flowers.*] Put these on the table, Vining, and bring me a vase.

[*Crosses to settee ; puts wreath down.*]

VINING.

Yes, miss. It was a wonderful night last night, miss.

[*Puts flowers on small table up R., gets vase from sideboard and brings it to table.*]

ULRICA.

Were you there ?

VINING.

[*At table.*] Yes, in the gallery. I carried Mr. Cecil's hymn-book to the first choir he ever sang in. I had to see his first appearance in opera at Covent Garden.

ULRICA.

[*At table, puts violets in bowl.*] It was nice of you, Vining. I'll tell my brother. [*A barrel-organ commences "La Donnà e Mobile" immediately under window. ULRICA and VINING start and look nervously at door L.*] Please send him away, Vining. My father will be so angry if it wakes him.

VINING.

Yes, miss.

[*Hurries out C.*]

[*ULRICA hurries to window and closes it. She smiles through her fears as she glances at the door L. She crosses, takes up wreath from couch, looks at the card and reads the inscription. Organ stops.*]

ULRICA.

"With the warmest wishes of Sir Isaac and Lady Jacobson."

[*Knocker is heard and door-bell rings; a troubled look flits across her face as she stands undeterminedly looking first at the wreath and then at the door L. She makes up her mind; goes to the piano and places the wreath on the top of the piano. Opens the window again.*]

VINING.

[*Reënters C.*] Miss Jacobson.

[*VINING closes door C., after ESTHER'S entrance; he goes down L., gets chair and places it foot of table and exits C., first arranging two wreaths and flowers on the small cabinet at doorway. Enter ESTHER JACOBSON, a dark, attractive, warm-hearted, impulsive and altogether romantic young lady of eighteen. She has an enthusiastic, excitable, rapid method of talking and a pealing, infectious laugh.*]

ULRICA.

[*Gives a little cry of pleasure R. of ESTHER, and embraces her.*] My dear Esther, how early you are!

[*Brings her down front of settee.*

ESTHER.

[*Impulsively and excitedly.*] Oh! I've been up for hours. I scarcely slept last night at all! I was so excited. Oh! Your brother. Last night! Oh!

[*Words fail her, she sinks on the Chesterfield, C.*

ULRICA.

[*Standing beside her, R., smiling, holds her right hand.*] You liked him?

ESTHER.

Liked him? He is wonderful! What an artist! It isn't merely his voice, but his art. His carriage. His atmosphere. His personality. He was so true—so simple—so powerful. So dignified—so great—

[*Lack of breath stops her.*

ULRICA.

[*Places her hand over her mouth; sits, laughing.*] You little enthusiast.

ESTHER.

[*Jumps up C., turns, facing ULRICA.*] His poise! His grace! And his last scene! [*Faces audience.*] Oh! [*Impulsively turning to ULRICA.*] And all the while I was watching him, I kept thinking: "I know him. I know him. He knows me. Insignificant me." And to think he's your brother. How happy you must be!

[*Clasping her hands.*

ULRICA.

Of course I am.

ESTHER.

And proud.

ULRICA.

Very proud. [*Points to wreath on piano.*] Look, your father's wreath. And ever so much the largest.

ESTHER.

What can a mere wreath convey? How can mere prose do justice to such a master? It would take a poet. And a great poet, too!

[*Very enthusiastically.* ULRICA listens and looks at door L.

ULRICA.

Sssh!

[*Quiets ESTHER and crosses to door L. Listens.*

ESTHER.

[*Alarmed.*] Is your brother in there?

ULRICA.

No. My father's in there—asleep.

[*Turning from door.*

ESTHER.

Oh!

ULRICA.

[*Crossing to L. of ESTHER.*] Cecil spent his first night with us for years last night. This will be his first breakfast in the bosom of his family since he's become famous.

ESTHER.

[*Pressing her heart.*] Oh! Oh! If he were to come in.

ULRICA.

Well? And if he were?

ESTHER.

I think I should die.

ULRICA.

[*Taking her by the hands, swinging her and laughing at her.*] You silly, silly child. I believe you're in love with him.

ESTHER.

I am.

ULRICA.

Oho, I'll tell him.

ESTHER.

[*Pulls herself away.*] If you do I think I'd kill myself. Tell me. How was he? Last night? After the performance? [*Eagerly.*]

ULRICA.

[*Matter of fact.*] Just as he always is. Quite ordinary. And rather tired!

ESTHER.

[*C.*] Ulrica! *Tired*—perhaps; but *ordinary*—never!

ULRICA.

And very thirsty.

ESTHER.

Thirsty—*he* thirsty! “Don Giovanni”?

ULRICA.

[*Laughing.*] Doesn't Don Giovanni drink in the banquet scene?

ESTHER.

Yes. But out of goblets of gold, and with the world of pleasure and beauty around him.

ULRICA.

Well, Cecil drank out of ordinary glasses, and with us around him. Just us. [*Laughs. Takes ESTHER in her arms and hugs her.*] It's a shame to tease you.

ESTHER.

[*Slily.*] Ulrica, *my* brother comes home to-day!

ULRICA.

[*Starts ; releases ESTHER.*] Adrian! Oh!

[*Turns away, R.*

ESTHER.

Yes. Oh! He's graduated with honors, and he holds the record for the half-mile. *We* are very proud of *him*.

ULRICA.

[*Moves away thinking to R. of couch.*] Of course! Of course!

ESTHER.

[*Follows her toward R. C.*] Come in this afternoon.

ULRICA.

[*Eagerly turns.*] May I?

ESTHER.

Do. Adrian wrote me to ask you.

ULRICA.

Did he? Oh!

ESTHER.

[*Laughing.*] Ha, ha, ha!

ULRICA.

[*In front of settee, indignantly.*] What are you laughing at?

ESTHER.

[L.] He's—he's—oh! awfully in love with you.

ULRICA.

Don't be silly.

[Turns away.

ESTHER.

He is. He is. He is! [Goes to end of couch following ULRICA.] Awfully in love! Do you love him?

ULRICA.

[Sits R. end of settee.] Esther!

ESTHER.

Oh! [Sits beside her on settee L.] I knew I'd forgotten something. On Sunday night we're giving a wonderful reception. Every one will be there. It is to celebrate my father being made a knight. Sir Isaac! See? After the opera last night my father and mother asked Cecil—I mean your brother—if he would sing for us. And he consented.

ULRICA.

Really?

[Rises.

ESTHER.

[Puts her right hand on ULRICA'S left.] You must come too, dear, and your father and mother.

[Taking ULRICA'S hand.

ULRICA.

[Shakes her head.] No. My father doesn't allow Sir Isaac's name to be mentioned in his presence.

ESTHER.

[Pouting, rises and goes a step to C.] Oh! How stupid. Why does he hate papa so much? Because he is a Jew?

ULRICA.

Partly!

ESTHER.

How narrow. There are some very nice Jews. I know we are! [*Goes toward ULRICA.*] Because he's rich?

ULRICA.

A good deal.

ESTHER.

Father couldn't help it. The money seemed to just come to him—and stay there. Because he bought up your father's mortgages on the Cotswold estate, and has come to live next door to him?

ULRICA.

That, perhaps, most of all.

ESTHER.

Mother did that. She wanted to live next door. And to save arguments and fuss—papa hates fuss—he just gave in, and there we are. But oh, what a pity! What a pity!

[*The door C. opens quietly and CECIL, a handsome, powerful young man of thirty, enters. He is carrying a large photograph of a pugilist.*]

ESTHER.

[*Holds out her hand to ULRICA; goes on impulsively.*] Ulrica, how wretched, how stupid, how beastly money is.

CECIL.

[*Coming down cheerily.*] Good-morning, Ulrica.

ESTHER.

[*Rises, pressing her heart violently, in a whisper.*] Don Giovanni!

CECIL.

[*Coming down L. of ULRICA, shows her photograph.*] What do you think of this? My old boxing master sent this round to me after the performance last night. Listen. [*Reads.*] "To my pupil, Mr. Cotswold, from the heavy-weight champion of England, Jake Blumenthal. You were very good. Jake." There! [*Holds up photo to L., so that audience can see it, then hands it to ULRICA, who turns up stage a step.*] Even he was at the Garden last night to see my success. Wasn't it nice of him? [*CECIL looks at ESTHER, who is standing trembling, half turned away from him. He crosses to ESTHER, takes her hands; enthusiastically.*] Why, Esther! My child sweetheart! [*Holding her by both hands.*] I'm delighted to see you again. Delighted!

ESTHER.

[*Struggling bashfully.*] Please let me go!

CECIL.

You're trembling! Just as you used to years and years ago. [*Looking at her admiringly.*] What a beautiful young lady you've grown into. Why, you're—— Sit down.

[*Gently presses her on to Chesterfield, then goes to ULRICA, whispers to her in pantomime, telling her to leave them. ULRICA behind couch laughs and tiptoes to door R. Puts photograph on piano in passing, just above book "The Ghetto."*]

ESTHER.

[*Looks around and sees ULRICA at door; jumps up alarmed.*] Ulrica!

[*ULRICA laughs and exits R.*]

CECIL.

[*Laughing, goes to end of sofa.*] Splendid! I've got you all to myself.

ESTHER.

But, Mr. Cotswold —

CECIL.

Now sit down — The first time I've seen you for hundreds of years, and you want to run away, the moment I speak to you. I'm surprised at you! You seem to forget that we're old sweethearts. Do you remember when we were married?

ESTHER.

[*Blushing, hanging her head; very faintly.*] Yes.

CECIL.

We toddled up to the altar like grown-up people, and took the marriage-vows, and then, just like *some* grown-up people, separated almost at once. How long ago it seems. Now here we are both grown up and you've forgotten all about me.

ESTHER.

Oh, no, I haven't.

[*Turns quickly.*]

CECIL.

Did you ever think of me? [ESTHER *nods.*] *I've often thought of you—often!*

ESTHER.

Have you?

CECIL.

Very often. Sometimes I was on the point of writing to you. But how dare a poor devil of a musical student write to the beautiful daughter of a merchant prince? Eh? No right to, at all, had he? At least not until he made a success. Well, I've made it—at last!

ESTHER.

I know you have. [*Turns to him.*] I am so very, very glad, Mr. Cots——

CECIL.

[*Checks her.*] Ah! *Cecil!*

ESTHER.

[*Meekly.*] Cecil!

CECIL.

That's right. Do you know the first to come on the stage last night and congratulate me? Your father! He seemed as pleased as I was that I'd succeeded.

ESTHER.

He was. We were all pleased.

CECIL.

Were *you* there?

ESTHER.

Yes.

CECIL.

Really? [*ESTHER nods.*] Like the opera? [*ESTHER nods.*] Like me? [*ESTHER nods vigorously.*] Splendid. Coming again? [*ESTHER nods.*] Often? [*ESTHER nods.*] Magnificent. Do you sing? [*ESTHER shakes her head.*] But you play?

ESTHER.

Oh, yes.

[*Nods.*]

CECIL.

Then I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll go through all the operas together. Shall we?

ESTHER.

Oh, I'd love to.

CECIL.

You shall. I'll call and see you this afternoon. [*Look of delight from ESTHER.*] And every afternoon if you'll let me—will you? [*ESTHER nods.*] You'd really like to see me? [*ESTHER nods.*] Every day? [*Nod.*] Positive? [*Nod.*] Tell me—[*bending toward her*] is there any of the child love left? Or is it all gone?

ESTHER.

Oh, no!

CECIL.

Some left? How much? [*ESTHER'S eyes meet his; she gives long sigh and drops her head.*] As much as that? [*ULRICA enters from door R. ESTHER nods.*] Splendid! [*ESTHER hears door handle turn; she jumps up and exclaims "Oh!" and crosses to R. C.*]

ULRICA.

Mother's coming.

[*Smiles at CECIL and ESTHER and goes out C., leaving door open.*]

CECIL.

[*To ESTHER.*] I'll take you home.

ESTHER.

[*L. of CECIL.*] No! No! Please!

CECIL.

I'll call this afternoon after rehearsal.

ESTHER.

Will you?

CECIL.

Certainly I will—till then ——

[*Takes her hand.*]

ESTHER.

Good-bye, Mr. Cots—

CECIL.

Ah, Cecil—Cecil—

ESTHER.

[*Bashfully.*] Cecil.

CECIL.

Au revoir, Esther. [*Holding her hand. ESTHER turns L. and goes up C. to door, turns, catches CECIL'S eye; business. Exit, closing door. CECIL gives expression of delight, turns to piano down R., sees wreath on piano, picks it up and reads card.*] "With the warmest wishes of Sir Isaac and Lady Jacobson." Isn't that splendid? [*Places wreath on couch. ULRICA enters C. To ULRICA.*] Isn't she beautiful? Isn't she perfect?

ULRICA.

That's just what she said about you.

[*Takes small jug from sideboard, and pours water in vase on table.*]

CECIL.

[*C.*] Did she? Has she been coming here often?

ULRICA.

Yes—to see me.

CECIL.

Does father like her?

ULRICA.

Oh, yes, in a grouchy way. But he hates the family worse than ever, especially now they're Sir Isaac and Lady Jacobson.

CECIL.

[*Sitting on L. arm of settee, laughing.*] That must have been a shock to him. By the way, how's the son?

ULRICA.

[*Blushing.*] The son?

CECIL.

Yes—Adrian. Do you ever see him?

ULRICA.

[*Embarrassed.*] Sometimes. [*Comes around front of table.*] See, Cecil dear, your flowers—they've just come from the theatre —

CECIL.

[*Rises; goes to her.*] Why, you're blushing—you're positively crimson. [*ULRICA covers her cheeks with her hands. CECIL takes her hands away.*] Ulrica, you're in love too.

ULRICA.

Cecil!

CECIL.

[*Holds her hands, taking her up c.*] You are, you are. Own up.

ULRICA.

[*Drops his hands; places her hands on his shoulders.*] Yes, I am. But, oh, please say nothing. Father would make things even more miserable for me than they already are.

CECIL.

Here's a pretty complication. I'm in love with Esther—you're in love with her brother — [*Laughing.*] I've just come in time.

ULRICA.

Promise me you'll say nothing to father?

CECIL.

Say nothing! I'll say everything. I'll carry him by storm.

ULRICA.

Oh, no.

CECIL.

At the right moment. [*Placing his hands on her shoulders.*] At the right moment. I'm not going to allow him to stand in the way of my happiness, nor in the way of yours. Here—here—where's breakfast? I'm starving!
[*Crossing to bell.*]

ULRICA.

[*Excitedly.*] Don't. Don't ring!

CECIL.

Why not?

ULRICA.

If breakfast were served before father came in he wouldn't eat a thing all day.

CECIL.

Wouldn't he? Well, it's time he was up. Let us call him.
[*Going to door l.*]

ULRICA.

[*Alarmed.*] No. Don't. Please. We always have to wait until father wakes. He won't allow any one to call him.

CECIL.

Great heavens! Suppose he slept all day? I'll call him at once.
[*Turning to door.*]

ULRICA.

[*Insistently.*] Cecil! You mustn't! If you do, he won't leave his room at all.

CECIL.

What nonsense. [*About to knock at door.*]

ULRICA.

[*Going right over to him.*] Don't. Please. We have enough trouble with him when everything goes smoothly.

CECIL.

[*Turning to her.*] But it's so foolish. He must be even more difficult to manage than he used to be.

ULRICA.

[*Evasively.*] Oh, well. He's had a great deal of trouble. Don't; please don't.

CECIL.

All right, I won't. But Ulrica—tell me—honestly—how do you manage to live?

ULRICA.

Mother and I have had to work.

CECIL.

What kind of work?

ULRICA.

Translations, designs for dresses, anything that would earn a little now and then —

CECIL.

Has it been as bad as that?

ULRICA.

Everything is mortgaged now—and—and Sir Isaac Jacobson bought the mortgages. Even this house is his. We owe him rent for it. But the bitterest thing to father was his coming to live next door to us.

CECIL.

[*Goes to her, places his hand on her shoulder.*] Well, all that is going to be changed. And at once. Last night's success made me. I go to America next. I'm going to make vast sums of money. And the first will go to repay everything I cost my family.

[*Enter LADY COTSWOLD, door R.*

ULRICA.

Don't talk like that. We're all proud of you —

CECIL.

Well, I'm not particularly proud of myself.

MARGARET.

[*Coming down from door R. to C., smiling at her children.*] Good-morning, my dears.

CECIL.

[*Goes to her, kisses her.*] Good-morning, mother.

MARGARET.

[*Looking lovingly at him.*] Are you rested?

CECIL.

Quite.

MARGARET.

My boy, I do wish your father had heard you last night.

CECIL.

He will hear me. He must hear me. Every one will hear me —

ULRICA.

Isn't he conceited, mother?

CECIL.

Why, the whole world is going to hear me.

MARGARET.

The world, dear? [*Turning toward him.*]

ULRICA.

He's going to America, mother.

MARGARET.

[*Turns to CECIL, alarmed, going to him.*] Oh, no. Not America. Not across the sea, dear.

CECIL.

Across the sea are millions of dollars, and I'm going over to annex some of them, and then [*embracing her*], charming mother and devoted sister, no more worries, no more struggles. Everything shall be made easy for you.

MARGARET.

I don't want anything but my own near me. Especially just now when your father is not quite himself.
[*Bell rings long and loudly.*]

MARGARET and ULRICA.

[*Together, exchange glances and look at door L.*]
Father!

[*Enter VINING, C., carrying copy of "The Times."*]

CECIL.

Breakfast at last. I'm starving. [*Crosses to end of couch. Bell goes on ringing till VINING reaches door L.*] He seems just as impatient as ever.

MARGARET.

[*Smiling.*] Good-morning, Vining.

VINING.

[*Goes around back of table to door L.*] Good-morning, my lady. [*Exit, L.*]

CECIL.

[*Calling after him.*] Dress him quickly, Vining, and hurry the breakfast. [*The bell stops.*]

MARGARET.

[*Hurriedly and anxiously, comes down to CECIL.*] Before your father comes in I must warn you. Be very careful. He knows nothing about your sister's little legacy.

CECIL.

What legacy?

MARGARET.

Her aunt's. Don't you remember?

CECIL.

Why? Has she got it already?

MARGARET.

A year ago, Cecil.

CECIL.

I didn't know that. Why, that's splendid. Then you've not been so badly off as I thought. Why didn't you tell me?

MARGARET.

We didn't like you to know how it had been spent.

CECIL.

Spent? Is it spent? All of it?

[*Holding her hands.*]

MARGARET.

Yes, all of it. That is why I don't want you to ever refer to it before your father. He doesn't know.

CECIL.

[*A thought suddenly coming to him.*] How was it spent, mother? [*Pause.*] On me? [*He looks from MARGARET to ULRICA. MARGARET nods. ULRICA bows her head.*] Why didn't you tell me?

MARGARET.

Because we were afraid you would not have accepted it.

CECIL.

Nor would I. I'd have managed somehow. I'd have economized. Not lived as I did.

MARGARET.

We knew you'd succeed. And the singing lessons were expensive, and so——

CECIL.

[*Takes her hand.*] I've triumphed through your struggles. But it shall be repaid. Every penny, and with interest.

SIR JOHN.

[*Outside.*] Be careful, Vining, be careful. Do you think my feet are made of iron?

MARGARET.

[*In an anxious whisper.*] Not a word before your father. And oh, please, be careful with him—don't anger him, will you?

CECIL.

It doesn't need me to anger him, to judge by his voice. Vining's done it already.

MARGARET.

Remember, dear, if he's a little impatient and irritable, he has had a great deal to put up with since misfortune came to us.

CECIL.

I'll remember.

SIR JOHN.

[*Outside.*] That'll do, that'll do.

MARGARET.

[*Frightened.*] Here he is!

SIR JOHN.

[*Speaking through the half-open door.*] Once more—just once and I'll discharge you. I'll not have fools around me. Knaves I must have. They're all round me, but fools I pay wages to—no! Understand me, no! [*Enters L., banging door abruptly behind him. He is fully dressed save for a dressing gown. He is carrying a copy of "The Times," creased down at the "letters."*] Morning, everybody. Come! Come—come! Where's breakfast? [Vining enters L. and crosses to door C.] Why isn't it on the table? You heard my bell ring? [L. C.] Why isn't breakfast on the table, Vining? What is the use of my telling you the same thing day after day—day after day?

VINING.

Why, you distinctly said —

SIR JOHN.

[*Up c.*] Don't answer me. Get out! [VINING *exits c.* To MARGARET.] It seems a simple thing, my dear, to manage a household with a little order, a little method. Instead everything late. Always late. It's bitter, bitter.

MARGARET.

But, John, my dear, don't you know —

SIR JOHN.

Talking won't mend it, my dear. [*Turns suddenly, shudders.*] Shut that window —

[SIR JOHN *crosses to fire, throws "The Times" on table as he goes. CECIL starts for window, but ULRICA runs to get there first.*

CECIL.

[*Front of piano, speaks as SIR JOHN rubs his hands.*] Good-morning, father.

[ULRICA *has closed window and stays there.*
CECIL *picks up book.*

SIR JOHN.

[*Turning quickly.*] Why good? It's a particularly *bad* morning. My whole day is spoiled. Completely spoiled. [*Sniffing.*] What is it I smell? [*Seeing the roses, etc., on small table by door.*] Flowers! Pah! This is not a boudoir—it's a breakfast room. Away with them. [*He knocks them all on floor. CECIL picks up flowers and hands them to ULRICA.*] Ulrica, take them out of my sight. Put 'em where I can neither see 'em nor smell 'em [VINING *enters c. with breakfast dishes, toast, eggs, coffee, etc.; arranges them on table assisted by MARGARET. SIR JOHN sees the wreath on sofa.*] What's this? A wreath? Great heavens! This isn't a mausoleum.

[*Takes up large wreath and reads card through eye-glass.*]
 "With the warmest wishes of Sir Isaac and Lady Jacobson." The impertinence! The damned impertinence! Sir Isaac! Ha! Vining, put that in the fire.

[*Flings the wreath on the floor. VINING picks it up, puts it on tray, turns to MARGARET, C. She takes vase with violets from table and puts it on VINING'S tray. Then ULRICA puts two small wreaths and other flowers on tray.*]

CECIL.

[*At piano, back of couch.*] They are *my* flowers, father, it's my wreath. Vining, put them in my room.

[*VINING exits C. with the flowers, etc.*]

SIR JOHN.

[*Pacing about furiously.*] An insult. That's what I have to put up with continually—insults. That damned Jew to present my son with a wreath.

ULRICA.

He didn't mean it as an insult, father. It was just a thoughtful, kindly act.

SIR JOHN.

I don't want his thoughts. I don't want his kindness. I don't want his wreaths—not even when I'm buried. Though that, no doubt, would give him the greatest possible pleasure. Wreaths. Pah! [*CECIL laughs with genuine amusement. SIR JOHN, angrily.*] How dare you laugh, sir?

CECIL.

When you talk like that, father, I think you're funny.

SIR JOHN.

Funny! Funny! How dare you? I would remind you that you are speaking to your father, sir—not to some low music-hall person—the kind of society you seem to prefer.

CECIL.

Why should you think that?

SIR JOHN.

Theatres! Operas! Music-halls! They're all alike. Mountebanks!

[All through the foregoing scene MARGARET and ULRICA have poured out the coffee and served breakfast.]

ULRICA.

Father, please come to breakfast.

SIR JOHN.

Breakfast! The very thought of it revolts me. *[Shudders.]* My appetite's gone. *[CECIL crosses to top of table and sits. ULRICA puts cup of coffee by SIR JOHN'S plate.]* Entirely gone. My whole morning destroyed. *[Goes to table, places ULRICA'S chair. Sits chair R. of table. They all arrange serviettes. SIR JOHN stirs coffee; sips it; furiously.]* Who put sugar in my coffee?

MARGARET.

[Nervously.] I gave you the wrong cup, John. This is yours.

[ULRICA passes cup to him, and his back to MARGARET.]

SIR JOHN.

Of course. Naturally. Nothing could be right.

CECIL.

[*Cheerily.*] Now, father, you must be reasonable.

SIR JOHN.

Reasonable! [*To MARGARET.*] Margaret. [*She looks up.*] Kindly request your son not to bring his theatre manners to my breakfast table. Reasonable! [*Enter VINING, C., with ham, which he places on sideboard. SIR JOHN stares in horror at opened egg.*] Vining! [*VINING comes to R. of SIR JOHN.*] Take this egg away and destroy it. [*VINING takes up the egg gravely and looks at it, solemnly shakes his head and exits C.*] It's bitter. Bitter. Why? I ask you, why? Cannot even one's eggs be decent? Or at least of recent birth? Surely it is not too much to expect? Margaret, may I ask you where you contrive to purchase such abominations?

MARGARET.

From the very best shop in the neighborhood, John. Mr. Solomon's.

SIR JOHN.

Solomon's! *Solomon's!* Is there no Christian dairy-man in the district? Solomon's. What is England coming to when one has to buy even one's food from Jews? An island, eh? Ha—we're a small country entirely surrounded by Jews—that's what we are.

CECIL.

Now, father —

SIR JOHN.

Silence. [*Pause.*] Solomon's! I suppose you get your vegetables from Lazarus' and your meats from Isaac's and your groceries from Levy's? Jews, Jews, Jews wherever one turns. Three invisible brass balls suspended over the entire United Kingdom. [*SIR JOHN takes toast from rack, butters it savagely, takes marmalade from jar,*

then pauses suddenly, looks from one to the other; they are all eating, not looking at him.] Well, why doesn't some one say something? Are you all dumb? [*Pause.*] Not good enough to be spoken to, eh? [*Eats.*] I'm funny, am I? Unreasonable? No Christian dairy-man in the district, eh? It's bitter! Bitter!

[*Goes on eating, takes apple from dish, cuts it, and eats it.*]

CECIL.

[*Little pause, then cheerfully.*] Well, you seem to be enjoying your breakfast, father, after all.

SIR JOHN.

[*Looking at him malevolently.*] I suppose I may have enough to eat in my own house, sir? [*Pushes away everything from him.*] Finished.

[*Turns chair from table, throws himself back, folds his arms and crosses legs.*]

CECIL.

[*Smiling.*] Don't take everything I say amiss.

SIR JOHN.

I'd have you know I never take anything amiss. Ha! Amiss. That's a nice way to talk! [*Drums his fingers on the table; then looks at sideboard.*] Ulrica, a slice of that ham, between two thin pieces of bread, if you please. [*ULRICA rises, and goes to sideboard.*] Amiss! I come into this room to begin a new day in a life we live but once, and I find what? The whole room filled—*filled* with wreaths. From whom? Jacobson! Mr. Isaac Jacobson!

CECIL.

Sir Isaac, father.

SIR JOHN.

No, sir—*Mr.* he was born, and *Mr.* he'll always be to me. We have been baronets for generations. My father was *born* Sir John—*your* father was born Sir John—birth, sir, *birth*. That is what counts—or should count—in the world. Birth. The majesty of birth! [*Takes up "The Times"*; *hands it to* ULRICA.] Have the kindness to read that, if you please.

ULRICA.

[*Takes the paper from him, looks at it.*] Where, father?

SIR JOHN.

There—there—there — [*Hitting paper with knife handle.*] Where my thumb was.

ULRICA.

[*Reads.*] "To the Editor of *The Times*: Sir: It is a matter of the deepest pain and regret to me to see amongst those selected by the Liberal Government as deserving the dignity of a title the name of one who, by birth, race and religion, is rabidly opposed to the best interests of this great Empire. The Majesty of Birth has ever been the watchword of the Conservative party. It is indeed a sorry day for England when self-seeking shopkeepers obtain seats on the Liberal benches of the House of Commons, and in recognition of their support have titles conferred upon them. Believe me to be your obedient servant, John Cotswold, Baronet."

SIR JOHN.

[*Very pleased.*] Ha! Let *Mr. Jacobson* digest that with his bacon and eggs this morning.

[ULRICA *passes sandwich to* SIR JOHN.]

CECIL.

[*On the point of eating, stops.*] Bacon, father?

SIR JOHN.

Yes, sir, bacon and pork. How do we know what he eats when he's in private?

CECIL.

[*Good-humoredly.*] At any rate your letter does not apply at all to Sir Isaac. He's a splendid type of man.

MARGARET.

[*Trying to check him.*] Now, Cecil.

SIR JOHN.

Go on, my boy, say it. I'm a fool! Your father's a liar and a fool.

CECIL.

I'll not say another word.

MARGARET.

I don't think your father slept well, dear.

SIR JOHN.

Slept well? I never slept at all. Just as I was dropping off into a doze I was roused with the most infernal row right under my window. At first I thought it was a riot. Or a fire. What was it? My son escorted home by a howling mob.

CECIL.

Just a few of my fellow students who'd been to hear me sing; that was all.

SIR JOHN.

All? *All?* I suppose the whole of the Hebrew aristocracy next door were on the balcony to greet you?

CECIL.

They were, father. The ladies excitedly waving their handkerchiefs.

SIR JOHN.

[*Laughs hoarsely.*] Ladies! Ha! The Lady Rebecca airing her high born bosom in the night air for a mob to stare at.

MARGARET.

[*Reprovingly.*] John!

SIR JOHN.

Well?

MARGARET.

[*Indicating ULRICA with both hands.*] My dear!

SIR JOHN.

Eh? Oh, I beg your pardon, Ulrica.

CECIL.

[*Chaffingly to SIR JOHN.*] Remember—the Majesty of Birth!

SIR JOHN.

How dare you?

ULRICA.

The Jacobsons seemed delighted with Cecil's success.

SIR JOHN.

I'd rather he'd make a failure.

CECIL.

Thank you.

SIR JOHN.

I shall never reconcile myself to the idea that a Cotswold, the last of his race—must humbly and delightedly bow to every cobbler's apprentice who had paid sixpence to hear him sing indifferent music.

CECIL.

Indifferent! Mozart!

SIR JOHN.

Well, then, to hear him sing good music indifferently—if you prefer it. [*To MARGARET. ULRICA drinks coffee.*] That in my worthless opinion, sir, is a degradation—a damn degradation—I beg your pardon, Ulrica.

CECIL.

May I say one word?

SIR JOHN.

You just promised you wouldn't. But go on. The father may not be heard—but the son must be. Go on. Out with it, out with it, out with it. [*Sits back.*]

CECIL.

I stayed away all these years because I didn't care to come back home until I had succeeded.

SIR JOHN.

Ah!

CECIL.

Well, I have succeeded.

SIR JOHN.

Exactly.

CECIL.

Read the newspapers this morning —?

SIR JOHN.

I never read the newspapers.

CECIL.

Except *The Times*.

SIR JOHN.

The Times isn't a newspaper. It is a dignified guider of public opinion; a broom that sweeps the country clean, sir. That's what *The Times* is, sir, a broom, sir.

[*Eats sandwich.*]

CECIL.

Well, even *The Times* treats me generously. Read what it says. [SIR JOHN takes "*The Times*" and flings it across the room. CECIL looks at MARGARET and ULRICA; they give him imploring glances not to anger SIR JOHN.] On all sides I have been treated courteously, congratulated, fêted, encouraged. Until I come home—until I meet my father.

SIR JOHN.

[*Calmly.*] My boy—out with it. Say it. I'm a fool, your father's a fool.

CECIL.

[*Jumping up.*] Oh, if you can't be reasonable —
[MARGARET puts her hand on his arm.]

SIR JOHN.

[*To MARGARET.*] You hear that? [*To ULRICA.*] You see, my child?

CECIL.

For heaven's sake, father, don't let us quarrel the first day I'm home. I have to earn my living. We're poor —

SIR JOHN.

Ha! Now he throws my poverty in my face!

CECIL.

[*Sits; then speaks.*] No, I don't. I sympathize with you.

SIR JOHN

I don't want your sympathy.

CECIL.

I'm going to relieve your poverty.

SIR JOHN.

You, sir? Relieve *me!* How dare you!

CECIL.

Last night's success puts me at the top of the ladder.

SIR JOHN.

Well, I hope you fall off!

CECIL.

Now that I have succeeded, won't you try and see at least a little with my eyes?

SIR JOHN.

No, sir, I will not. I've used my own for a great number of years and I'm perfectly satisfied with them.

CECIL.

[*Laughing.*] Oh, come, come, father, bury the hatchet. Let me sing without your antagonism.

SIR JOHN.

Never, sir! Never! Sing? As a living? As a servant? No, sir. If you must sing, do it in a choir or in a social way for your equals. Not for a lot of ragamuffins whose shillings go to pay your miserable salary.

[*Drinks coffee.*]

CECIL.

[*Rises, crosses to C., picks up "The Times"; hotly.*] Very well, if you won't give me your sanction, I'll go on singing without it. And for all the money I can earn. From any one. Yes, sir—any one. Even the Jacobsons. I sing there on Sunday night—next door—and for a fee—a professional engagement!

ULRICA.

[*Reproachfully.*] Cecil!

SIR JOHN.

[*Rising, trembling with rage, turns to CECIL.*] You shall not, sir. You shall not enter that man's house.

CECIL.

Why not? Just because he's —

SIR JOHN.

A Jew, sir—a damned — [*Distinct look from MARGARET and ULRICA.*] I beg your pardon, Ulrica.

CECIL.

But what a Jew?

SIR JOHN.

A knighted one—the more disgrace to this miserable government.

CECIL.

At least give him some credit for his achievements!

SIR JOHN.

What achievements? Beyond making money? And all his race do that.

CECIL.

Think what he's done for the poor, the struggling! The ambitious!

SIR JOHN.

Show. All done for show. To hide his money-making. To sneak a title.

CECIL.

He has no need to do that; Sir Isaac's a genius. A financial genius.

SIR JOHN.

Genius! Pah! What has genius to do with birth, sir?

CECIL.

I quite agree with you.

MARGARET.

Really, Sir Isaac is not so very dreadful.

SIR JOHN.

[*Turning quickly on her.*] Are you going to begin too? Have you forgotten what that tribe has done for us?

CECIL.

Now, father! I —

SIR JOHN.

Silence! His father had the smallest hovel on the Cotswold estate. He made chairs that came to pieces directly you sat in them. Paid his rent when he could and lived like a rat in a hole. Now—now—forsooth my Lady Rebecca sits in state in real chairs next door to us. Her precious husband practically owns the estate and we pay him rent—sometimes. Rent for our own property! Schah! I could tear them to pieces. Jacobson, indeed! Jacobson!

[*Crosses down L.*]

CECIL.

This is pure race hatred.

SIR JOHN.

[*Coming back c.*] It is. I do hate 'em—root and branch.

CECIL.

His daughter, too?

SIR JOHN.

[*Turning to him.*] No, sir. Not his daughter, too. She's different. I don't believe she's his daughter at all.

MARGARET.

[*At table, shocked, indicating ULRICA.*] John!

SIR JOHN.

[*To ULRICA.*] I beg your pardon. What I meant was there's nothing of the Old Testament about Esther—except her name. But her father—see—Cecil—if you dare cross their threshold—out of my house you go bag and baggage, and good riddance, too!

CECIL.

[*Jumps up, turns to door.*] I'll take you at your word. I go to an hotel to-night.

MARGARET.

Oh, no!

ULRICA.

You mustn't, Cecil. [*Turns to SIR JOHN.*] Father, ask him to stay here. Make him welcome. He's been away so long.

SIR JOHN.

Let him learn to obey me—to respect me —

CECIL.

[*Up by door.*] That I will do better by keeping away from you. [*Opening door.*] Good-morning.

ULRICA.

[*Following him.*] Cecil. Don't go. For my sake—stay!

CECIL.

[*At door. In an undertone to her.*] I must. I've a rehearsal of "Hoffman" in half an hour. Perhaps a little later I'll come back—when he's cooled down.

[*Exit, C.*]

MARGARET.

[*Putting her hand on SIR JOHN'S arm.*] John, don't let him go like that!

SIR JOHN.

Don't do that, my dear. I dislike it very much. [*Goes to door; calls after him.*] Cecil! Cecil! A word—if you please— Here! [*SIR JOHN moves down L. of couch; CECIL appears in door.*] Do not let us enter into this discussion with a spirit of acrimony. [*Looks; sees CECIL is not beside him, turns to door.*] Here—here—here— [*CECIL comes down to SIR JOHN.*] We mustn't be hasty, my boy—we mustn't be hasty. You—that is I— What was I going to say? [*Remembers.*] Of course. You really wish to continue to—to sing—eh?

CECIL.

Continue! As long as there's a cobbler's apprentice left with sixpence to hear me, I'll sing. Good-morning. [*Exit, C.*]

SIR JOHN.

Ha! There's a son! There's obedience. [*VINING enters with tray, collects breakfast things and exits C.*] You see, my dear; that's the rising generation. Upon my word! I wonder what my father would have said if I had dared— [*Looks around; takes cigar from his*

case.] Ulrica, come here. [ULRICA goes to him.] Tell me frankly. Word of honor. Never mind what the others say. They don't matter that — [Snaps his fingers.] Is Cecil any good? Eh? Out with it!

ULRICA.

[Warmly.] I never heard any one sing like him.
[Clasping her hands.]

SIR JOHN.

That might mean anything! Good or bad?

ULRICA.

He's magnificent!

SIR JOHN.

[Disappointed, yet half pleased.] Do you really think so, eh?

ULRICA.

I do.

SIR JOHN.

[Moves restlessly a pace or two; stops.] Ulrica! Get three seats for to-morrow night.

ULRICA.

[Joyfully; turns.] Father!

SIR JOHN.

But in as dark a box as possible. I don't want to be seen, mind.

ULRICA.

[Turns to MARGARET, who is at sideboard.] Mother! We're going to the opera to-morrow night to hear Cecil.

MARGARET.

We, dear?

ULRICA.

Father is going too.

MARGARET.

[Comes c., tears in her eyes.] Oh, John!

SIR JOHN.

[Goes c. to her; sharply.] What's the matter?

MARGARET.

You've forgiven Cecil?

SIR JOHN.

No, I've not. I'll wait until I hear him sing first. That may be harder to forgive than his disobedience. [Turns up R.] Where are the matches? Where are the matches? [He goes to writing-table and sideboard at back; knocks all papers off peevishly. MARGARET hurries to sideboard, ULRICA to fender seat; finds matches.] For goodness' sake, tell Vining to leave them where they can be seen. [Comes down c. ULRICA brings matches to him, c. He takes them from her.] Thank you, my dear.

MARGARET.

[At door, to ULRICA.] Come, dear.

SIR JOHN.

[Strikes match.] Ulrica!

ULRICA.

Yes, father.

[She goes to him.]

SIR JOHN.

You think the rascal has something in him besides cheek? [Lighting cigar.] Eh?

ULRICA.

He's among the finest singers in the world.

SIR JOHN.

Dear me! [*Puff's out smoke.*] That'll do. [*Hands her the burned match and box; she puts it on small table and* MARGARET and ULRICA *exeunt c.* SIR JOHN *moves about down R., then over L., smoking his cigar savagely. Sees flower on floor, L.; picks it up and puts it on table; dusts hands.*] Sir Isaac! The damned Hebrew! And my son to sing for him, to—to—— [*Stops in front of painting of Lord Beaconsfield.*] Benjamin Disraeli, Lord Beaconsfield. Another Jew. They even penetrate into our government. Out of this room he goes. To the garret. [*Moving about.*] Sir Isaac! [*Picks up book from piano.*] "Children of the Ghetto," by Israel Zangwill. Damn "The Ghetto." [*Hurls it across the room.*] My son a singer. A tramp bawling songs in the street his equal! [*Turns to the piano; picks up music and reads.*] Prelude by Rubenstein. Rubenstein! Another of them. [*Flings it at door R. Sees the picture of the pugilist on piano, looks at it through his eye-glass.*] What in the name of all that is horrible is this? [*Reads.*] "To my pupil—Mr. Cotswold, from the heavy-weight champion of England, Jake Blumenthal." [*Throws it down and stamps on it.*] Put there to annoy me. To—t-to—— [*Enter VINING, c., with card on salver. SIR JOHN, turning, sees him, screams at him.*] What do you want? Can't you make a noise when you come in? Don't creep about like a cat. What do you want?

VINING.

[*Frightened.*] A gentleman to see Mr. Cecil, Sir John.

SIR JOHN.

A gentleman? You surprise me. Who is he? [*Snatches the card from salver and reads it.*] "Mr. Walter Lewis." Lewis! Lewis! I wonder if he's a Jew. I wonder! Well, don't stand staring there. Show him in, and then tell Mr. Cecil. [*VINING exits c.*] I suppose

he's a Hebrew—must be with a name like that. [*Crosses to fire.*] Nothing but Hebrews around me. [*Goes to sit on fender seat; sits on cigarette box, picks it up.*] Moses and Gluckstein. Moses and Gluckstein!

[*Throws it into the fireplace; stands glaring savagely.* Enter VINING, C.

VINING.

Mr. Lewis.

[*Enter LEWIS and exit VINING.* WALTER LEWIS is a genial, somewhat common musical agent, aggressive in manner, loud in attire. He has slightly Hebraic features and accent. He puts silk hat on small table by door, walks well into the room over R., humming an operatic air and smiling in a confident, self-satisfied manner.

SIR JOHN.

[*Accusingly.*] You're a Jew, sir.

LEWIS.

[*In absolute astonishment, surprised into a slight Jewish intonation.*] I beg your pardon. I'm a Presbyterian.

SIR JOHN.

Then there must have been a mistake at your baptism.

LEWIS.

Well, upon my —

SIR JOHN.

You wish to speak to my son?

LEWIS.

Mr. Cecil, yes; but—have I the honor of addressing Sir John Cotswold?

SIR JOHN.

You have, sir!

LEWIS.

[*Effusively holding out his hand.*] Delighted. My warmest and heartiest congratulations.

SIR JOHN.

[*Drawing back and looking indignantly.*] Congratulations? For what, sir?

LEWIS.

Your son—last night! [*Kisses his fingers.*] Superb! Weren't you there?

SIR JOHN.

No, I was not.

LEWIS.

No, really? He's the operatic idol of the hour. The papers this morning! Oh, the papers! full of him. Absolutely *full!*

[*Taking out press cuttings.*

SIR JOHN.

Ha!

LEWIS.

Columns of praise! Columns!

SIR JOHN.

I'm damn sorry to hear it!

LEWIS.

[*Horrified.*] Sir?

SIR JOHN.

I say, I'm damn sorry. Isn't that plain, sir? Damn sorry.

LEWIS.

Well, upon my —

[Enter CECIL; sees LEWIS; is annoyed at his being there.]

CECIL.

[Coming down to LEWIS.] Why, Lewis, I told you yesterday I'd call at your hotel this morning.

LEWIS.

I couldn't wait. I positively couldn't wait. *[Pulling out press cuttings.]* Have you seen those? Have you seen them?

CECIL.

[Impatiently.] Yes, yes, I've seen them.

LEWIS.

Your fortune's made. Absolutely made. I've a cable from America this morning—from Hammerstein.

[Pulling out cable.]

SIR JOHN.

Hammerstein! Another of 'em.

CECIL.

What do they say? You'll excuse us, father?

SIR JOHN.

Oh, pray don't mind me in the least. Besides, I can leave the room. *[Going up C.]*

LEWIS.

[Crosses over to him, seizing SIR JOHN by the arm.] No, Sir John—no. Not until you've heard my news. You'll be delighted! positively delighted.*[Puts his right hand on SIR JOHN'S left arm.]*

SIR JOHN.

[*Releasing himself.*] Don't paw me, sir. [*Pauses ; sits.*]
What is your news?

[*Dusts his sleeve where LEWIS touched him.*]

LEWIS.

[*Undertone to CECIL.*] Remarkable man, your father.
Positively remarkable. Gentleman every inch.

[*Getting cable out of pocket.*]

SIR JOHN.

Dreadful fellow. All hands! And such hands! Ha!
My son's new friends.

LEWIS.

[*Reading cable.*] Here we are. "Forty evenings—
one hundred pounds. Hammerstein."

CECIL.

[*Smiling.*] That's very good.

LEWIS.

Good? *Good?* Why, it's ridiculous. I won't do it
under *two* hundred.

CECIL.

[*Laughingly.*] You won't do it? Capital!

SIR JOHN.

Well, sir, your news—your news. What is it?

CECIL.

I have an offer to go to America.

LEWIS.

Yes, Sir John. He's had an offer—through *me*—to go
to America.

SIR JOHN.

What? One moment—Mr.—Mr. —

LEWIS.

Lewis, Sir John.

SIR JOHN.

[To CECIL.] You are going to America?

LEWIS.

Well, no. On the whole he won't go. [*Protest from CECIL.*] At least not on these terms.

[*Tapping the cable.*]

SIR JOHN.

And I only hear of this now and from a stranger.

CECIL.

These are only the preliminary negotiations, father.

LEWIS.

Negotiations? Nothing of the kind. You have only to say "Yes," and it's all arranged. But you won't. Oh, no. Not at that figure. We'll ask two hundred pounds for forty evenings, and we'll get it.

SIR JOHN.

"We"? Are you going to sing with my son, sir?

[*CECIL turns away laughing.*]

LEWIS.

[*Roars with laughter.*] Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha! Me sing? Splendid. Delicious. Ho, hoho!

SIR JOHN.

[*Furiously.*] Stop that noise, sir. Stop it! [*LEWIS stops laughing.*] Do I understand that my son is to get two hundred pounds for forty evenings' singing?

LEWIS.

[*C., roars louder than ever with laughter.*] Better and better. [*Crosses to SIR JOHN; accents each word.*] Per performance, Sir John. Two hundred pounds per performance. [*Taps SIR JOHN on shoulder.*]

SIR JOHN.

[*Springing up savagely.*] How dare you touch me, sir? Keep your hands off me. And don't shout, sir; I'm not deaf.

LEWIS.

[*Holding his sides.*] Oh, that's too rich. You'll be the death of me. You will, indeed. [*Wiping his eyes.*] I'll tell you what. I'll write my answer to this here. Have you a writing table? [*Looking around.*] Ah, here we are! [*As he goes up.*] You'll be the death of me. Not deaf! Splendid! Delicious!

[*Still laughing, he sits down and hurriedly writes.*]

SIR JOHN.

Turns my morning room into an office. [*To CECIL.*] Who is this creature?

CECIL.

He's my agent, father.

SIR JOHN.

Agent? A music-hall agent in my house?

CECIL.

No, no. Not music-hall—*operatic*. He is the managing partner of Lewis, Lewis and Epstein.

SIR JOHN.

Epstein! Another of 'em. I'm making a collection of steins.

LEWIS.

[*Coming down L. of CECIL.*] How's this? [*Reads.*]
"In spite of my persuasion Cotswold insists on two hundred pounds—immense success last night—advise to close at once. Lewis." There we are. How's that?

SIR JOHN.

"In spite of my persuasion." The fellow lies by telegraph.

LEWIS.

I'll telephone this at once to the cable office. Where is your telephone, Sir John?

[*Looking around room.*]

SIR JOHN.

I have no telephone, sir, and thank God for it.

LEWIS.

All right. I'll run into Jacobson's—I should say Sir Isaac's—next door.

[*Starting toward door C.*]

SIR JOHN.

Ha, you know him, do you?

LEWIS.

[*Coming back to C.*] Sir Isaac? Know him? I should say so. Intimately. In musical matters he does nothing without me. He's a wonder. Do you visit next door, Sir John?

SIR JOHN.

No, sir, I do not!

LEWIS.

Really? Oh, but you should. [*To CECIL.*] Take your father in on Sunday.

SIR JOHN.

What?

[*Door opens and MARGARET and ULRICA enter. MARGARET has work-basket; ULRICA carries roll of manuscript. MARGARET goes to L. of table and chair.*]

CECIL.

[*In undertone to LEWIS.*] Shut up, Lewis. [*Going to door C., meets MARGARET and ULRICA. He stops and introduces LEWIS.*] Mr. Lewis—my mother and sister.

LEWIS.

Charmed! Charmed, indeed. [*To ULRICA.*] Do you sing, too?

[*CECIL opens door and stands waiting.*]

ULRICA.

[*Smiling.*] I'm sorry, no.

SIR JOHN.

Thank heaven for that. He'd want to send you to Australia.

LEWIS.

Well, they give splendid terms in Australia—splendid.

SIR JOHN.

Then pray cable them a lie, too.

CECIL.

Come, Lewis.

[*In doorway.*]

LEWIS.

Ladies—Sir John—a pleasure to have met you. Hope we shall meet again, and soon. How about a little sup-

per to-morrow night after "Faust," eh? Suppose we all go to the Savoy? All of us?

[SIR JOHN *throws up his hands and collapses on the Chesterfield.*

CECIL.

Come along.

LEWIS.

Well—good-day. [*Pauses in door.*] Magnificent presence, your sister. What a Mimi in "Boheme."

CECIL.

Don't talk rot.

[*Pushes LEWIS out C., and follows him, closing the doors after him. MARGARET, with her work, sits L. of table. ULRICA goes to writing table up R., and reads the manuscript.*

SIR JOHN.

[*Rises. Beside himself with rage.*] The impudent blackguard. Supper! At the Savoy! All of us! An agent—a servant! Now you see. This is the type of creature my son associates with. Lewis, Lewis and Epstein. Epstein! He'll call next [*to MARGARET*] and make *you* an offer. Suppose any of our old friends were calling and met him here, what would they say? Suppose for example Captain Trevor came back suddenly from India, and ran in to see Ulrica and found us hobnobbing with that!

ULRICA.

Captain Trevor? Captain Trevor has been in London for weeks.

SIR JOHN.

What? For weeks? How do you know?

ULRICA.

Esther Jacobson told me.

SIR JOHN.

Esther? How did she know?

ULRICA.

He is visiting them now.

SIR JOHN.

Visiting them! Them? Why hasn't he been here?

ULRICA.

Father, why shouldn't we face the truth? Why should any one visit us? We're poor. That's the reason, and we may as well recognize it.

SIR JOHN.

Rubbish. Poor! I am—yes. Well, my own fault. I know it—your mother is. Her fault—for marrying me. But you—— [*Comes to her.*] You're not poor. You have your aunt's little fortune. Aha! I've never allowed you to touch a penny of it. [*ULRICA and MARGARET exchange glances.*] See what it is to have a firm father. So, my dear, if ever the final wreck comes, you at least will be safe. Trevor knew it. Asked about it.

ULRICA.

[*Smiling.*] Perhaps he despised poor auntie's hundreds. Maybe millions beckon him.

SIR JOHN.

Millions? What millions? Whose millions?

ULRICA.

Next door.

SIR JOHN.

What? That — [*Swallows the word.*] I don't believe it!

ULRICA.

It's true. Esther told me.

SIR JOHN.

Esther? He is paying court to her?

ULRICA.

[*Nods.*] For weeks past.

SIR JOHN.

The puppy. The contemptible puppy. The—the — [*Breaks off; looks at ULRICA, softens; goes to her; quite gently.*] My dear—does it—does it—hurt you? [*Hand on her arm.*]

ULRICA.

No. On the contrary, I'm glad.

SIR JOHN.

[*One hand on each of ULRICA'S arms, looking intently at her.*] My poor Ulrica. My poor Ulrica. My misfortunes have hit you hardest of all.

ULRICA.

Don't say that, father. I'm happy now.

SIR JOHN.

Are you?

ULRICA.

Now Cecil is home. If you'll let him stay home.

SIR JOHN.

[*Change of manner; irritable again.*] Schish! Let him go his own way. But—this—Trevor—and Esther — She allows him —

ULRICA.

No, she hates him as much as I did. But her mother encourages him.

SIR JOHN.

Ho! Rebecca! Lady Rebecca! [*Goes to fireplace; angrily throws cigar away.*] They would purchase a husband for their daughter as they did their clothes a year or two ago—at second hand. Second hand, by God. The knaves—the—the — [Enter VINING, with letter and telegram.] Well, what do you want?

VINING.

A telegram—and a letter brought by hand, Sir John.

SIR JOHN.

[*Snatches them.*] That will do. [VINING exits. SIR JOHN, putting in his glass.] Who telegraphs to me? [*Looks at the envelope.*] Miss Cotswold. For you, Ulrica!

ULRICA.

[*Takes it.*] Thank you. You'll excuse me?

SIR JOHN.

Open it. See what's in it.

ULRICA.

[*By couch; opens it and reads it.*] Adrian.
[*Blushes crimson.*]

SIR JOHN.

Well? Who is it from?

ULRICA.

[*Hesitating.*] No one.

SIR JOHN.

No one? What does it say?

ULRICA.

Nothing.

SIR JOHN.

[*Drily.*] What a remarkable telegram—from no one with nothing in it. Let me look at it.

ULRICA.

No, father, please.

[*Putting it behind her.*]

SIR JOHN.

Give it to me.

ULRICA.

I can't.

SIR JOHN.

Ulrica!

ULRICA.

Don't ask me to do that, father—please.

SIR JOHN.

I want that telegram. At once! [*Pause.*] Do you hear me? [*Pause.*] Give it me.

ULRICA.

[*Resolutely.*] I will not!

SIR JOHN.

[*Aghast.*] What?

ULRICA.

I—will—not! [SIR JOHN goes to her to snatch it from her; ULRICA tears it in pieces.] You shall not read it!

MARGARET.

[Coming to front of table.] My dear ——

ULRICA.

Oh, I've put up with all these cruel, petty humiliations long enough! [To SIR JOHN.] You gave me no liberty—no happiness—no friends—you even drive my brother away from me—but this last cruelty—I'll not submit to it! I'm wretched! Wretched! Wretched!

SIR JOHN.

[Amazed.] Ulrica!

ULRICA.

[Almost hysterical.] It's from the only person who's shown me the least kindness or consideration, and you would keep us apart if you knew. He's coming back to-day. This was to tell me. It was to—to ——

SIR JOHN.

Who is he?

ULRICA.

I won't tell you! You'd treat him as you do everything and every one I've ever cared for. You'd drive him away from me. I—I—wish I were dead! I wish I were dead!

[Sobs as if her heart would break and sinks down on sofa, her head on left arm of sofa. MARGARET goes to her, back of sofa, and bends over her.]

SIR JOHN.

Now, my dear, leave her to me. [Bends over ULRICA.]

Come, come, don't cry! Don't cry! There, there, there! You shall do just what you like. [*Patting her.* ULRICA sobs bitterly all through this scene.] Sssh! Sssh! Don't do that. [*Turns to MARGARET.*] Why do women cry? Ulrica, my dear, stop, stop! I'll buy you something next time I go out. Word of honor, I will. Ribbons—or a bonnet. See? Sssh! Remind me to ask you for the money. There, there, there, there! [*She cries more quietly.*] That's better. All over, eh? That's better. [*SIR JOHN strokes ULRICA'S hair and kisses her.*] That's right—never again. Never again. [*MARGARET approaches as if to caress her.*] All right, my dear, leave her to me. [*MARGARET crosses back to L. of table L.*] All right, eh? Good! Now ——— [*Suddenly sees the letter in his hand.*] Ah! I'll read you my letter. Eh? Of course I will. Certainly I will. [*Fixing in his glass, opens envelope and picks out a one hundred pound Bank of England note.*] What's this? One hundred pounds. Who dares to send me money? [*Looks at envelope.*] Mr. Cecil Cotswold. Oh, it's for Cecil, is it? Who sends Cecil money? [*Looks closely at letter.*] What atrocious handwriting. [*Looks down at the signature.*] Jacobson! [*ULRICA looks up wiping her eyes and controlling herself.*] Jacobson sends my son money? Well ———

MARGARET.

Why does he send Cecil money, John?

SIR JOHN.

[*Mumbles through the letter.*] The dog! This is the last word. The last!

MARGARET.

What does he want, John?

SIR JOHN.

It's infamous! Infamous!

MARGARET.

But what does he say ?

SIR JOHN.

That tinkering, money-hoarding wretch dares to offer this—*[holding up note]* to a Cotswold.

MARGARET.

Let me read it, John. *[Reaches out for letter.]*

SIR JOHN.

Don't touch it. Don't pollute yourself.

MARGARET.

But we'd really like to know ——

SIR JOHN.

And you shall know. That stock-jobber hires your son — hires, mind—for one hundred pounds to sing to him after his dinner on Sunday night. *[Flings the letter and the bank-note down on the table and wipes his fingers with his handkerchief. MARGARET picks up letter and reads it.]* How dare he ! The mongrel ! How dare he !

MARGARET.

It's a very polite invitation.

SIR JOHN.

It's an outrage. Finish it.

MARGARET.

[Reads it aloud.] " We should esteem it a favor if you would delight our guests and ourselves with your glorious art."

SIR JOHN.

And then—without another word—to enclose that. *[Points to bank-note.]* It's bitter—bitter.

MARGARET.

That certainly was tactless.

SIR JOHN.

Tactless? It's—it's—there's no word strong enough to characterize it. Hired like a juggler for the amusement of his grinning guests. [*Crosses to bell.*] Not while I'm alive. I've yet to see the day when I'll permit a son of mine to fall so low. Paid in advance. The price of his shame. [*Enter VINING at door C.*] Vining, my coat, my hat, my gloves, my cane—at once——

[*Exit VINING, C.*]

MARGARET.

John!

ULRICA.

[*Rises.*] Father!

MARGARET.

Surely, you're not——

SIR JOHN.

I'm going to fling—that—[*pointing to note*] in his face—the damn chair-maker.

MARGARET.

[*Alarmed.*] Oh, John!

ULRICA.

Father, please!

SIR JOHN.

What are you frightened about? That I'll fight him? Me? I wouldn't soil my hands on him. Although a horsewhip should be the only answer to that. [*Pointing to letter.* VINING enters C., with coat, hat, gloves and

cane. SIR JOHN *goes up; takes off dressing-gown and throws it over VINING'S arm.*] Come along, Vining. Don't be all day.

VINING.

[As he assists to dress him.] You're going out, Sir John?

SIR JOHN.

[Sarcastically.] No, Vining, I'm going to wear these in the house. Of course I'm going out.

VINING.

[Gives gloves.] So early?

SIR JOHN.

Yes—so early! Have you any objection?

VINING.

But you usually read all the newspapers at this time every morning.

SIR JOHN.

Bah!

VINING.

And this morning they speak so well of Mr. Cecil.

SIR JOHN.

Do they? Well, you can throw them in the fire, Vining. Throw them in the fire.

MARGARET.

[Anxiously.] John! Where are you going?

SIR JOHN.

First of all into the air or I'll suffocate, and then—

[*goes to table and with his gloved hand takes the letter and the bank-note and puts them into the envelope and places it in his breast pocket*] and then—to give these the attention they demand. [*Dusts his fingers where he touched the letter, looks closely at the gloves.*] Hello!
 [Takes gloves off.]

ULRICA.

Father—please don't go next door.

SIR JOHN.

And why not?

ULRICA.

Because—you mustn't.

SIR JOHN.

Mustn't! Indeed? You forbid your father, eh? Things have come to a pretty pass. Mustn't! Ha!

ULRICA.

If you have any consideration at all for me—for my happiness—don't go!

MARGARET.

John—I beg you —

SIR JOHN.

Silence! I shall do as I please. Kindly attend to your own business. Ah, yes. To be sure—Ulrica—you might give me some small change. [ULRICA takes coin from purse.] I must buy myself some new gloves. [Impatiently.] Come along, my dear, come along. [Takes the money.] Thank you. Just remember I owe you this. [Goes up. Gives VINING the old gloves which he holds with his fingers far away from him.] Vining, put

those in the fire. [*Takes hat and cane. To the ladies.*]
Good-morning.

[*Passes out C., erect and dignified, followed by*
VING. MARGARET *sits in chair L., ULRICA*
is by piano, R. end of couch.

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE.—*The action passes in the drawing-room of SIR ISAAC JACOBSON'S house. It is a massive, luxuriously furnished room. Everything conveys the impression of immense wealth and discerning taste, marred here and there by certain outrè feminine touches in the minor details. There is a solid, deeply-recessed door R., connecting with the dining-room. At back arches R. and L. stretch away to the remainder of the mansion.*

[*As curtain rises, REBECCA is seated on couch, c. TREVOR is standing beside her. LEWIS standing up R. with MAXIMILIAN, who has handed him a cigar and is lighting it. ESTHER is heard playing softly off L.*

REBECCA.

Tell me, dear Captain Trevor—isn't it dreadful in India? Amongst the blacks?

TREVOR.

Not at all, it's jolly!

REBECCA.

But they *are* black, aren't they?

TREVOR.

Very!

REBECCA.

Are you going to stay in England now?

TREVOR.

I'm afraid so!

REBECCA.

Well, you must take me over your barracks—will you?

TREVOR.

Delighted!

REBECCA.

I've always loved the army—and soldiers.

TREVOR.

Thank you!

LEWIS.

[*Comes down.*] Now, that's what I call tobacco—try one, Captain Trevor. [MAXIMILIAN *takes cigar to* TREVOR.] You get nothing as good as that in your canteen, I'll wager. [*Exit* MAXIMILIAN.] Sir Isaac gets them straight from the importers—and the price—what do you think they cost per hundred?

[LEWIS *crosses to* TREVOR; *they talk and go up back, l. of settee.* LEWIS *then works R.; looks at picture.* TREVOR *drops l. of table l.* *Enter* ADRIAN. *He comes down R. of couch.*

ADRIAN.

Mother!

REBECCA.

[*Rises, embraces him.*] My dear boy!

ADRIAN.

[*Sits beside* REBECCA *on couch.*] Where's father?

REBECCA.

He has some tiresome deputation or other in the Victorian room.

ADRIAN.

And Esther?

REBECCA.

The sweet child is playing in there.

[*Indicating door L.*]

ADRIAN.

[*Fumping up.*] I must see her!

REBECCA.

[*To ADRIAN.*] You know Captain Trevor?

TREVOR.

How d'ye do?

[*ADRIAN bows coldly.*]

REBECCA.

And Mr. Lewis?

ADRIAN.

[*Crosses to LEWIS, R.*] Hello, Lewis! How's the musical game going?

[*REBECCA converses with TREVOR.*]

TREVOR.

Game! Art, sir! Art! Flourishing! Never better! A new star burst on us last night and eclipsed all the others—Cecil Cotswold! *I* found him.

ADRIAN.

Fancy old Cecil! Didn't think he had it in him!

REBECCA.

Oh! He's a master, really a Maestro! Adrian—he sings here on Sunday night at the musicale.

ADRIAN.

[*To REBECCA.*] Here? Does he? What will Sir John say?

LEWIS.

[*Hurriedly taking ADRIAN down R. REBECCA turns to TREVOR.*] Don't mention Sir John's name, for goodness' sake—there's been such a fuss all through luncheon! He's written a letter to *The Times* about Sir Isaac.

ADRIAN.

About father?

LEWIS.

Yes! I haven't seen it myself but your mother is so upset, poor lady! [*Looks at picture on wall, R.*] By the way, that's a fine piece of work and no mistake—splendid! New, too, isn't it?

ADRIAN.

[*Looking at it casually.*] New, you vandal! That's early eighteenth century. [*Goes up; looks at it closely.*] Mother! Why! That used to hang next door in the hall. [*Goes anxiously down to her.*] Did Sir John sell that to father?

[LEWIS makes signs to him not to speak.

REBECCA.

Your father bought it at Christie's with several other *objets d'art* for a mere song—a mere song!

[*Enter ESTHER from door L. ADRIAN meets her.*

ADRIAN.

Esther!

[*ESTHER meets ADRIAN at back of couch; they embrace; then give a glance at TREVOR, go up to fireplace and talk; then walk round to small table R., where they sit. ESTHER in armchair. She plays cards. TREVOR crosses L. to sofa and takes up paper.*

REBECCA.

Mr. Lewis, have you prepared the programme for our festival on Sunday night?

LEWIS.

[*Approaching sofa.*] Well, rather! And it will be a festival, I can tell you!

REBECCA.

Captain Trevor, Mr. Lewis is the royal agent. Does all the command performances—for the King—at Sandringham and Buckingham Palace. Don't you, Mr. Lewis?

LEWIS.

I should say so! [*To TREVOR, pointing to sleeve-links.*] Have you seen these, Captain Trevor? Have you seen them, Lady Isaac? [*To REBECCA.*] Will you excuse me? [*REBECCA indicates assent and listens, crossing to TREVOR.*] See these, Captain Trevor? Sent me by the late King—King Edward the Seventh. Oh, we were friends, very great friends; he gave me them for what he called the very finest concert ever given to royalty.

TREVOR.

Really?

LEWIS.

See this pin? [*Pointing to the pin he is wearing.*] From George!

TREVOR.

George?

LEWIS.

Yes, George—the present King.

TREVOR.

Oh, yes, of course.

LEWIS.

Said it was the only time he ever heard Wagner really sung out of Germany. But the Emperor! Emperor William of Germany! There's a gentleman! Sent me a cane with the head as big as that. [*Business.*] Solid gold! Would you like to see it, Captain?

TREVOR.

Don't bother!

LEWIS.

No bother at all—got it down-stairs—never go a step without it. May I send for it, Lady Isaac?

REBECCA.

Certainly, Mr. Lewis.

TREVOR.

Please don't trouble.

LEWIS.

Well, I'll show it to you as we go out—it's really a wonder—a wonder!

REBECCA.

[*Slight movement toward LEWIS.*] Tell me, Mr. Lewis, who have you engaged for Sunday night?

LEWIS.

There'll be Sembrich, Zanatello, Pachmann—and Cecil Cotswold. He'll be the hit. Do you know him, Captain?

TREVOR.

[*Uncomfortably.*] Vaguely!

LEWIS.

He is certainly a wonder. London's at his feet this morning. I never saw a success like it.

REBECCA.

I am very sorry for his sake that he should be the son of so bitter and foolish an old man.

ESTHER.

Mother!

ADRIAN.

Foolish?

LEWIS.

Oh, no, Lady Isaac! Sir John's all right. Met him for the first time this morning. Struck me as the type of man that'd grow on one. Quite a gentleman of the old school.

REBECCA.

Old school indeed! Well, when I read his letter this morning in *The Times*—directed most undoubtedly at us—I made up my mind. I said to my husband, "We need his house." *C'est impératif!* The Cotswolds must go! [ADRIAN rises.] We can't have people on our estate who don't know their place. Eh, Captain Trevor?

TREVOR.

Yes—that is—er—no!

LEWIS.

Funny! I see *The Times* every morning for the musical stuff, never saw that letter at all. Now I come to think of it, I don't believe I ever *have* seen a letter in *The Times*. I don't think any one reads 'em except the people who wrote 'em.

REBECCA.

Pardon! *We* read the letters always! [LEWIS bows.]
The Cotswolds go next quarter-day. Absolutely! [Turns
to TREVOR.] Don't you think I'm right, Captain Trevor?

TREVOR.

Ah! Certainly!

ADRIAN.

[Turning on TREVOR *disgustedly*.] What! I thought
you were a friend of the Cotswolds?

[ESTHER, *as soon as ADRIAN speaks, stops playing
cards and listens with interest to scene between
ADRIAN and TREVOR.*

TREVOR.

No.

ADRIAN.

You used to know them?

TREVOR.

Yes.

ADRIAN.

You accepted their hospitality?

TREVOR.

Partly.

ADRIAN.

And at one time were actually a suitor for Miss Cotswold's hand?

REBECCA.

[*Movement of protest.*] Adrian!

ADRIAN.

[*Angrily.*] Mother, please! [To TREVOR.] Weren't
you?

TREVOR.

[*More and more uncomfortable.*] Not altogether.

ADRIAN.

Yes, you were—altogether. Then, because they met with reverses, you discontinued calling.

REBECCA.

[*Rises; sits again.*] My dear boy!

ADRIAN.

Just a moment, mother, just a moment. [*To TREVOR.*] Didn't you?

TREVOR.

I—a—went to India!

ADRIAN.

Have you called there since you returned from India?

TREVOR.

A—no! It would be particularly disagreeable to see the ruin of an old family, so I stayed away.

REBECCA.

[*Hurriedly, turning to TREVOR.*] Very nice and delicate of you, Captain Trevor. Charming!

ADRIAN.

[*Hotly, to TREVOR.*] And now you agree with my mother that Sir John and his family should be turned off the estate they have owned for generations. Do you think that's decent?

REBECCA.

[*Hurriedly.*] Oh! Oh! Don't answer him, Captain Trevor. Don't answer him!

ADRIAN.

[*Furiously.*] He needn't answer! There is only one word for such conduct as his. And that word the presence of my mother and sister prevents me from using. I shall be happy to use it at a more favorable opportunity.

TREVOR.

Really?

ADRIAN.

[*Looking him straight in the eye.*] Yes, Mr. Trevor! Really!

TREVOR.

Sorry!

[*Turns away and sits L. of table, L.*]

REBECCA.

Oh! Oh! Your father shall hear of this. You bad, bad boy! Wait until your father hears how you've behaved.

[*Fanning herself. ADRIAN goes down R. REBECCA turns to TREVOR and makes apologetic gesture. Through the arch from R., and down C., comes SIR ISAAC JACOBSON, a tall, slight, distinguished-looking man of from fifty to fifty-five. He has a quiet, masterful, diplomatic manner, a delicately ironic humor and a keenly observant eye. His whole atmosphere is one of conscious strength, masked by his subdued tones. He carries a copy of "The Times."*]

JACOBSON.

[*Comes down L. of ADRIAN, smiling with real pleasure as he sees his son.*] Well, Adrian!

[*ADRIAN goes up to him. They shake hands warmly.*]

ADRIAN.

Father!

JACOBSON.

[*Shaking hands with him and looking at him affectionately and admiringly.*] The scholar-athlete! I'm proud of you!

REBECCA.

[*Turning from TREVOR.*] You wouldn't have been, Isaac, if you'd been here a moment sooner. He behaved abominably.

JACOBSON.

[*Looks at REBECCA, then turns to ADRIAN.*] Did you?

ADRIAN.

Is it true that you are going to evict the Cotswolds?

JACOBSON.

Evict them? Why should I?

ADRIAN.

Because Sir John wrote a letter to *The Times*, and you've taken offence at it.

JACOBSON.

On the contrary. Sir John's letter deserves some special recognition. It is altogether admirable in thought, in subject, and in English.

ADRIAN.

But mother says you're going to turn them out.

JACOBSON.

Your mother must have misunderstood me.

REBECCA.

[*Turning to* JACOBSON.] What? *Misunderstood*—if they do not pay their rent —

JACOBSON.

They may not be in a position to do so just now. Until they *are*, they can stay just as long as ever they please.

REBECCA.

Isaac! After his insult, in the public newspaper?

JACOBSON.

He wrote nothing that is not absolutely true. "The Majesty of Birth" has been my battle-cry for years.

REBECCA.

[*Furiously.*] Now once and for all, Isaac —

JACOBSON.

[*Quietly and firmly.*] Not just now, dear.

LEWIS.

I really must read that letter! I really must. You know, Lady Isaac, Sir John struck me this morning—I met him quite intimately, you understand—on his own hearth—he struck me as a particularly fine type of old buck.

ADRIAN.

[*Indignantly.*] Buck?

ESTHER.

Buck!

REBECCA.

Buck!

TREVOR.

A—buck!

LEWIS.

Proud as Lucifer! A pretty well-developed *temper*—but a *gentleman* every inch!

REBECCA.

[*Sitting and fanning herself and gasping.*] *Gentleman, indeed!*

TREVOR.

[*Rises; to JACOBSON.*] Sir Isaac, your son has thought fit to say certain things in your absence that I feel it is only fair I should reply to now that you are here. I don't wish to be misjudged.

JACOBSON.

[*Sitting settee L.*] You may be sure of that, Trevor.

TREVOR.

[*Clearing his throat nervously.*] Exactly! At—a—one time—I was a—on a certain degree of intimacy with Sir John Cotswold!

JACOBSON.

Yes?

TREVOR.

Cecil and I were—a—in a measure—schoolmates. But I—a—found my visits particularly irksome owing to Sir John's extreme irritability and all that. In short—it was—a—difficult ——

JACOBSON.

Well!

TREVOR.

Exactly ! Your son seemed to imply just now that my visits ceased because a—in a measure—that is to say—because Sir John had in short—met with reverses.

JACOBSON.

[*To ADRIAN.*] Did you say that ?

ADRIAN.

[*Firmly.*] I did.

JACOBSON.

You have no right to offend any guest of mine. The fact that Captain Trevor is in my house is sufficient to ensure him courteous treatment from every one here.

ADRIAN.

[*Hotly.*] But ——

JACOBSON.

[*Stops him, turns to TREVOR.*] My son wishes to apologize to you. I add my apologies to his.

ADRIAN.

Father !

[*JACOBSON turns and gives stern, silencing look at ADRIAN.*]

TREVOR.

[*Very much embarrassed.*] Well—of course—what I meant to say was ——

JACOBSON.

[*Turning to TREVOR.*] The matter is closed—with my sincere regrets.

[*Enter MAXIMILIAN, R. arch.*]

MAXIMILIAN.

The motor car, madam.

[*Exits.* LEWIS joins ADRIAN up R.]

REBECCA.

[*Jumping up.*] *C'est bien!* Mr. Trevor! Esther!
[*Steps toward ESTHER.*] We'll go for a nice, *petite* drive!

TREVOR.

Charmed!

REBECCA.

Esther.

ESTHER.

You must excuse me, mother. My head!

REBECCA.

Nonsense, child. The air will do you good.

ESTHER.

Not to-day. Please.

REBECCA.

[*Peevishly.*] Esther! Isaac! Please — [*Turns to*
JACOBSON.] The air! Speak to her! Make her go!
[ESTHER motions to JACOBSON that she doesn't
wish to go.]

JACOBSON.

[*Drily.*] Probably a rest would be better for her.

REBECCA.

[*Angrily.*] Of course! My wishes count for nothing!
Oh, very well. [*Goes up R. of couch; meets TREVOR at*
arch R.] Come along, Captain Trevor!
[ESTHER crosses to JACOBSON, who pats her cheek
and motions her to door L. She exits.]

LEWIS.

Which way are you going?

REBECCA.

Oh! To the Park, eh, Mr. Trevor?

TREVOR.

Capital!

LEWIS.

Well, just drop me at the corner of Park Lane, will you?

REBECCA.

Delighted!

[*Exit with TREVOR.*]

LEWIS.

[*To JACOBSON.*] I'm getting a few people for the Goldbergs to-morrow. They've just moved into the Barkshire's old place. Know the Goldbergs?

JACOBSON.

No! I do not!

LEWIS.

Oh, nice people—seem to grow on one—so to speak. They sent me these diamond studs for getting Violetta, the dancer, straight from Paris. Oh! I'm not wearing them to-day. Show 'em to you on Sunday. Oh, they're splendid people—made their money in oil—rolling in it! In money—not oil! Ha, ha, ha! I will have my little joke! [*Shakes hands.*] They're making a splash with music, too—and pictures! Ah! What would become of art in England to-day—but for us Jews?

JACOBSON.

Us! [*Looking at him. LEWIS realizes and pulls himself up.*] I thought you were a ——

LEWIS.

[*Quickly.*] I am! A Presbyterian! But at heart I'm
a Jew!—I am *really* at heart! [Exit R. arch.]

ADRIAN.

[*With feeling.*] Father, you surely don't sanction what
mother is doing?

JACOBSON.

What is your mother doing?

ADRIAN.

Forcing that fellow Trevor on Esther!

JACOBSON.

I'll not permit any one to be forced on Esther against
her wishes. [*The "Hoffman" music comes distinctly from
L., played on a deep-toned grand piano, with ESTHER
humming; they both listen. JACOBSON, looking at door L.,
listens and smiles.*] Her head is better.

ADRIAN.

[*Comes to R. of couch, after a pause through which the
music comes very softly.*] Please don't do anything to hurt
or humiliate Sir John Cotswold.

JACOBSON.

If by that you mean ejecting him, that I certainly will
not do. Such a thought never entered my mind.

ADRIAN.

But mother said —

JACOBSON.

I didn't contradict her so as to avoid useless discussion.
As for hurting and humiliating Sir John Cotswold, that
the British government has already done by honoring me.

ADRIAN.

Poor Sir John! He is humbled now with poverty.

JACOBSON.

His son will lift that from him. That is why I am interested in Cecil Cotswold. He is the right kind of young man. His birth helps instead of handicapping him. He is going to seek with his talent the fortune Sir John squandered with his hands.

ADRIAN.

[*Eagerly.*] How splendid to be able to do that. To make one's own name. To help one's own family. It's fine! It's —

JACOBSON.

[*On couch*] Adrian, you are beginning life. You must make your own way. You must work. Use the gifts nature has given you, profit by the advantages money has been able to buy you. From to-day that money ceases. Just the bare necessities I'll provide. Nothing else. Extravagance I'll never countenance. I'll not deprive you, my boy, of the birthright of making your own way by your own effort.

ADRIAN.

You speak as if you doubted me.

JACOBSON.

[*Places hands on ADRIAN'S shoulders.*] No, I don't doubt you. But Sir John's letter has set me thinking. He has put his finger with masterly intelligence on the important thing in life. Birth! The majesty of birth! It should be ever present. If one bears a great name live up to it. If one comes of humble origin, create a name for oneself—if one can, but never for a moment be ashamed of your origin. I want you to be proud of the fact that your grandfather was a poor struggling chair-maker on the estate I own to-day.

ADRIAN.

I am. I faced all that, father, at school and at college. Why, my first school fight and my last university one were both about you.

JACOBSON.

[*Smiling.*] Indeed? Did you win them?

ADRIAN.

The first one easily. The *last* one—well, it was a *draw*. But if my foot hadn't slipped ——

JACOBSON.

[*Laughs. Slaps ADRIAN on back.*] In the broader arena of life you won't find that necessary ——

ADRIAN.

Father! One thing more! In marriage. Would you object to my marrying a Gentile?

JACOBSON.

[*Pauses; looks at ADRIAN. Reflecting.*] If you saw in such a marriage the possibility of happiness ——

ADRIAN.

[*Enthusiastically.*] Happiness!

JACOBSON.

—— I wouldn't allow my personal feelings to stand in your way; but, Adrian, I'd feel that my life's work had been in vain.

ADRIAN.

[*Looks up at him.*] Why?

JACOBSON.

Because I want *you* to carry out what I've begun.

ADRIAN.

And I will.

JACOBSON.

In such a marriage you wouldn't find it easy. Are you in love with such a woman?

ADRIAN.

Yes.

JACOBSON.

Whom?

ADRIAN.

Miss Cotswold.

JACOBSON.

What! [*Astonished.*] Have you spoken to Sir John?

ADRIAN.

Not yet. I wished to speak to you first.

JACOBSON.

[*Shaking his head.*] I am afraid you are making a heavy rod for your back, my boy. He hates me.

ADRIAN.

But if I get his consent, shall I have *yours*?

JACOBSON.

I don't wish to dictate to you as to your future life. All I'd like would be to guide you. But I should be sorry; more than sorry. [*Enter ESTHER from L. He turns as if going, sees ESTHER, goes to her. Smiling at ESTHER.*] How is the headache?

[ADRIAN sits R., dejectedly.]

ESTHER.

[*Smiling back at him; goes to him.*] Quite gone.

JACOBSON.

[*Pinching her cheek.*] You little rogue!

ESTHER.

Oh, father, I *couldn't*!

JACOBSON.

Couldn't!

ESTHER.

Drive with that man.

JACOBSON.

But your mother?

ESTHER.

Mother encourages him. I *hate* him. Please don't let him come here.

JACOBSON.

He's my wife's friend, Esther.

ESTHER.

But I don't *like* him.

JACOBSON.

[*Taking her hands.*] And am I to close my doors to every one you dislike? If sometimes your mother does things that are not quite to your liking, just remember she is your mother. You understand?

ESTHER.

[*Quite simply; nods.*] Yes. I understand.

JACOBSON.

That's right.

[*Enter* MAXIMILIAN, R. arch.]

MAXIMILIAN.

A deputation from the Jewish iron-founders, Sir Isaac.

JACOBSON.

In the library. [*Exit* MAXIMILIAN, *R. arch.*] Part of my great scheme. To compel recognition for our race in every branch of industrial endeavor. Wouldn't you like to meet them, Adrian?

ADRIAN.

Not just now, father.

JACOBSON.

Very well, my boy. [*Goes up to arch R. ESTHER arrests his attention. He turns to ESTHER.*] Don't be uneasy, my dear. No one will be forced upon you if you don't like them. You are perfectly free to choose your own friends. [*Turning away up stage.*]

ESTHER.

[*Roguishly.*] And husband?

JACOBSON.

[*Stops and turns to her; pause.*] And husband.

ESTHER.

Dear father!

[*Impulsively rushes to him and embraces him.*]

JACOBSON.

[*Takes her face in his hands.*] And he'll be a very, very lucky man. Very lucky.

[*Kisses her forehead and exits R. ESTHER comes joyfully to front of couch.*]

ADRIAN.

Did you tell Miss Cotswold I was coming home to-day?

ESTHER.

I did.

ADRIAN.

I telegraphed her from Oxford in case you forgot.
[*Eagerly.*] What did she say?

ESTHER.

"Oh!"

ADRIAN.

[*Disappointedly.*] "Oh!"?

ESTHER.

Yes—just "Oh!"

ADRIAN.

Is that all?

ESTHER.

Well, it was a very *meaning* "Oh!"

ADRIAN.

Yes—but—"Oh!"

ESTHER.

She is coming this afternoon.

ADRIAN.

Here?

ESTHER.

[*Nods.*] At four.

ADRIAN.

[*Joyfully.*] To see me?

ESTHER.

[*Shakes her head, quizzing him.*] To take tea with me.

ADRIAN.

Did she *talk* about me? Much?

ESTHER.

No. Hardly at all.

ADRIAN.

Esther!

ESTHER.

We didn't have time. We had much more important things to talk about.

ADRIAN.

More important? What *could* be more important?

ESTHER.

Her brother, for instance. He made—oh! such a success last night.

ADRIAN.

I know. I read about it in the train.

ESTHER.

Adrian, he's magnificent! He's wonderful! He's——

ADRIAN.

[*Chaffingly.*] Hello! Hello!

ESTHER.

[*Indignantly.*] What do you mean, "Hello! Hello!"

ADRIAN.

[*Takes her hand; they both sit on couch; ADRIAN, pointing at her.*] You're in love with him! Is he in love with you? Come! Tell me!

ESTHER.

Yes, I am. He's coming in to see me this afternoon. Fancy! He's *always* loved me—*always*. Oh, I'm *so* happy—so *happy*!

ADRIAN.

[*Rises; goes R.*] And I'm miserable! Miserable!

ESTHER.

[*Rises.*] Why?

ADRIAN.

Father says that if I married a Gentile he'd feel his life's work were in vain!

ESTHER.

Oh!

ADRIAN.

What am I to do? [*Enter MAXIMILIAN, R. arch.*]

MAXIMILIAN.

Miss Cotswold!

ADRIAN.

[*Joyfully.*] Ulrica!

ESTHER.

[*To MAXIMILIAN; exchanges rapid glances with*
ADRIAN.] Show Miss Cotswold in!

[*Exit MAXIMILIAN.*]

ADRIAN.

[*Breathlessly.*] How can I tell her?

ESTHER.

[*Excitedly; turns to L.*] I'll leave you.

ADRIAN.

No, wait a moment—I won't give in. I'm sure when he really knows Ulrica, he'll consent ; I'll get her to appeal to him.

ESTHER.

But—— [MAXIMILIAN *shows in* ULRICA *and exits.*]
Ulrica !

[ADRIAN *joyfully goes up to meet her ; takes her hands and brings her to front of couch, c.*

ADRIAN.

Ulrica, how are you? I'm so glad to see you—did you get my telegram? Come, sit down here.

ULRICA.

Thank you, yes! Tell me, has my father been here?

ESTHER.

No!

ULRICA.

[*Drops on couch c.*] Thank heaven!

ADRIAN.

Why?

ULRICA.

Something dreadful is going to happen!

ESTHER.

Dreadful?

ADRIAN.

What?

ULRICA.

My father is going to call here to-day! To insult Sir Isaac!

- ADRIAN.
Insult him ?
- ESTHER.
Why ?
- ULRICA.
Because he feels Sir Isaac has insulted him.
- ESTHER and ADRIAN.
How ?
- ULRICA.
By sending that money.
- ADRIAN.
What money ?
- ULRICA.
To Cecil.
- ESTHER.
[*Anxiously.*] To Cecil ! Your brother !
- ADRIAN.
My father sent money to Cecil Cotswold ?
- ULRICA.
One hundred pounds.
- ESTHER.
Oh !
- ADRIAN.
Why ?
- ULRICA.
To sing here on Sunday night.
[ESTHER and ADRIAN exchange mortified glances.]

ESTHER.

[*Going nearer to ULRICA and sits.*] I'm sorry, dear.

ADRIAN.

And I'm very, very sorry, too.

ULRICA.

My father's beside himself. He left home to call on Sir Isaac an hour ago. So I sent my brother a note to the Opera House, begging him to get away if he could and come here at once. We must prevent them from meeting somehow.

ADRIAN.

We will! [*Determinedly.*] I will!

[*Enter MAXIMILIAN, R. arch.*]

MAXIMILIAN.

Mr. Cecil Cotswold.

[*General movement; all look at each other.*]

ADRIAN.

[*To ULRICA and ESTHER.*] Good!

ESTHER.

[*Breathlessly.*] Show Mr. Cotswold in.

[*Exit MAXIMILIAN.*]

ULRICA.

I'm so glad! Now all chance of a quarrel will be avoided.

[*Enter CECIL, R. arch. ESTHER goes to meet him.*]

CECIL.

[*As he comes in.*] Hello, sis — [*Goes to ESTHER.*] Esther! [*Turns to ADRIAN, down R.; shakes his hand.*] Why, Adrian, I'm delighted! Broken all records at Oxford, eh? You young Crichton!

ADRIAN.

[*Reddening.*] Oh, I don't know.

CECIL.

Well, what is all the trouble about? [*To ULRICA.*]
Have you told them?

ULRICA.

Yes.

CECIL.

Father's on the war path, eh?

ULRICA.

Oh, he's furious!

CECIL.

Because Sir Isaac sent me a hundred pounds? Why, he ought to be extremely grateful for my sake. I am. I need it. Two songs at fifty pounds each! It's magnificent. How did he find out about it?

ULRICA.

[*Looking down; very quietly.*] He opened the letter.

CECIL.

Oh! By mistake, eh? [*Pause. ULRICA shakes her head slightly.*] No! Dear, dear! Now I really *must* go to an hotel. I can't have all my letters opened, especially just now when I'm a popular singer, eh? [*Laughing unaffectedly.*] It would never do—would it? Well, has my father called?

ULRICA.

Not yet.

CECIL.

Good! It might have been only a threat after all. He may weaken.

ULRICA.

Oh, no. He'll call. He is just walking about trying to make up his mind what to say.

CECIL.

Very well, then, with your permission—[*crosses to ESTHER*] we'll wait here until he comes. We mustn't have any nonsense like that. It's childish—isn't it?

ESTHER.

I think it would be a great pity.

[*CECIL and she talk together.*]

ADRIAN.

[*To ULRICA, in a whisper.*] Ulrica, let us leave them!

ULRICA.

Why?

ADRIAN.

Oh, I've so much to tell you. And I can't tell it here, with Esther listening and ready to burst out laughing at any moment.

ULRICA.

But —

ADRIAN.

[*ESTHER laughs.*] There she goes! Esther, I'm going to show Miss Cotswold father's latest additions to the picture gallery.

ESTHER.

[*Mischievously.*] Perhaps Mr. Cotswold would like to see them too?

ADRIAN.

[*Furious; turns to CECIL.*] Would you?

CECIL.

Certainly I would.

ESTHER.

[*Disappointed.*] Oh!

ADRIAN.

[*Angrily.*] Oh!

CECIL.

But not just now. I'll wait until the gov'nor comes first.

ADRIAN.

[*Brightens up.*] Yes—that's much better. You'll be here?

CECIL.

[*Looking at ESTHER.*] Oh, yes. I'll be here. [To ADRIAN.] Don't hurry.

ADRIAN.

Right! [To ULRICA.] Come along. [They go up together.] Ulrica! This is the decisive moment in both our lives.

[ESTHER bursts out laughing; ADRIAN and ULRICA turn with hurt expression and exit, R. arch. ESTHER sits settee L.]

CECIL.

A very remarkable young man.

ESTHER.

[*Laughing.*] He's very much in love.

CECIL.

[Comes to side of settee, L.] The finest thing in the world at his age.

ESTHER.

With Ulrica !

CECIL.

[*Sits beside her.*] I know.

ESTHER.

Do you object ?

CECIL.

Why should I ?

ESTHER.

I wondered !

CECIL.

Another reason why the two old gentlemen mustn't meet.

ESTHER.

It's very hard on children when parents quarrel, isn't it ?

CECIL.

Very. That's why I rushed away—in the middle of rehearsal. I know my gov'nor so well. He's the best in the world, but a little hot-headed. I don't want the breach between the families to be any wider than it is. My dear, dear Esther !

[*Goes to embrace her. She rises.*]

ESTHER.

Oh ! Be careful !

CECIL.

What's the matter ?

ESTHER.

If my father should come in !

CECIL.

All the better! Let him come! Now, Esther—listen!
[*Sits down; ESTHER sits.*] I loved you when I was twelve, didn't I? I'm a little older now and I love you a great deal more. Oh! a great deal more — Now don't turn away—I'm not going to rest until you toddle up to another altar and say another "Yes," and this time I won't let you run away as you did before. I'm going to see your father to-day and ask his consent—now that I've got *yours*—and I have got yours—haven't I? Eh? Say it — [Pause.] Say yes!

ESTHER.

Yes.

CECIL.

Esther! You *do*?

[ESTHER gives more definite nod; he embraces her.]

ESTHER.

[*Realizes her father's wishes.*] But it will be no use now, I'm afraid.

CECIL.

What do you mean?

ESTHER.

Father told Adrian just now if he married a Gentile he'd feel his life's work were in vain! That may refer to me too!

CECIL.

Nonsense!

ESTHER.

Father means everything he says.

CECIL.

So do I ; and when I make up my mind to do anything I always succeed—even if it takes years. Well, I'm going to succeed in winning you !

[*Goes to embrace her.*]

ESTHER.

[*Smilingly.*] Be careful. Tell me, what were you rehearsing? "*Faust?*"

CECIL.

Oh, no. That's quite ready. We do it to-morrow night. We were running through "*Hoffman*" to-day.

ESTHER.

[*Clapping her hands.*] "*Hoffman*"—oh, how lovely ! I was playing it only a few minutes ago.

CECIL.

You know it?

ESTHER.

By heart. I know *all* your operas.

CECIL.

Then I'll tell you what we'll do. [*Rises.*] You play "*Hoffman*" right through for me, will you?

ESTHER.

[*Rises.*] Certainly I will.

CECIL.

[*Looking around.*] All right ; but where can we ?

ESTHER.

[*Points L.*] The music room is in there.

CECIL.

[*Goes to her ; takes her hand.*] Esther, to-morrow night I'll sing for you alone !

[*Looking down intently at her.*]

ESTHER.

Will you ?

CECIL.

[*Putting arms around her.*] I will !

[*ESTHER gives a little sigh, then suddenly breaks out.*]

ESTHER.

Oh !

CECIL.

What is the matter ?

ESTHER.

We're forgetting our *fathers* !

CECIL.

Fathers ! Of course we are. [*Sudden thought ; turning to ESTHER.*] I know ; may I ring ? [*ESTHER gives motion of assent. He goes up to bell and rings.*] Now, you just tell the servant to let you know directly my father calls. Then I'll go down and take him away before he can make any trouble.

ESTHER.

Oh, but I'm afraid —

CECIL.

You needn't be. Leave it all to me. The two old gentlemen shall not meet. [*Enter MAXIMILIAN with tray.*] There he is—tell him.

ESTHER.

[Turns to MAXIMILIAN.] Should Sir John Cotswold call on my father, will you kindly tell me first?

MAXIMILIAN.

Yes, miss.

ESTHER.

If I am not here, I shall be in the music room.

MAXIMILIAN.

[Starts to clear table R.] Very well, miss.

CECIL.

There! [Takes her hand.] Now, will you play for me? [She nods.] "Hoffman"? [She nods.] The Barcarolle? [She nods.] Would you like to? Certain? Positive?

[He backs off, door L., holding her hands. They pass out L., leaving the door partly open, and in a few seconds the music of "Contes d' Hoffman" can be distinctly heard, played with great feeling and nice discrimination. JACOBSON enters R., thoughtfully. He carries some papers in his hand. The sound of the music arrests him; he walks down R., when the sound of CECIL'S and ESTHER'S voices are heard chatting merrily. Then they both laugh. JACOBSON pauses. Then he stands listening to the music, smiling with pleasure.]

JACOBSON.

[To MAXIMILIAN.] We have visitors?

MAXIMILIAN.

Yes, Sir Isaac. Mr. and Miss Cotswold.

JACOBSON.

Why wasn't I told?

MAXIMILIAN.

You said you were not to be disturbed, Sir Isaac.

JACOBSON.

That will do.

[*As MAXIMILIAN exits L. arch, REBECCA enters R. arch.*]

REBECCA.

Isaac! [JACOBSON *turns: she goes down to him.*] I left Captain Trevor at his aunt's—Lady Galloway's. [*Crosses to couch, sits L. C.*] I do hope he'll propose to Esther. Think what such a marriage would mean to us! We'd be taken up everywhere, received everywhere!

JACOBSON.

My dear Rebecca, you don't seem to understand. It isn't a question of who will take *us* up, it is a question of who *we'll* take up. Who *we'll* receive.

REBECCA.

Look at the advantages such a connection would mean to Adrian!

JACOBSON.

I want Adrian to make his way as I did without connections of that kind.

REBECCA.

Ugh!

JACOBSON.

I can't allow——

REBECCA.

Now let me alone. My mind is made up. I know just what I am going to do, indeed I do.

JACOBSON.

Don't you consider my position at all, Rebecca? Remember we're laughed at and hated quite enough already without inviting ridicule. [*Sits beside her.*]

REBECCA.

Really! You needn't try to teach me how to behave! No, indeed. The idea! I represent our house as it should be represented. Parbleu! Whose idea was it, I'd like to know, to hire all these people for Sunday night? Who was it said last night when they were all around Cecil Cotswold congratulating him—"Hire him for Sunday night"?

JACOBSON.

Hire! Sir John Cotswold's son? Hire! Rebecca! Really, my dear!

REBECCA.

Yes, hire! Aren't we paying him for it? And paying him well? Who would think of giving a hundred pounds for two songs? Eh? Answer me that.

JACOBSON.

[*Music stops.*] A hundred pounds! Did you offer him that?

REBECCA.

Offer it to him? I sent it to him. A nice crisp hundred pound note with my invitation.

JACOBSON.

[*Rises; aghast.*] Rebecca! You didn't!

REBECCA.

I did. Certainly I did.

JACOBSON.

[*Indignantly.*] Oh!

REBECCA.

What'll be the result? Monday morning everybody will be talking about us!

JACOBSON.

Do you mean to tell me, seriously, you sent Sir John Cotswold's son a hundred pounds—as you would to a tradesman?

REBECCA.

Certainly I did. Now I suppose you'll say it's too much.

JACOBSON.

It is indeed too much. Rebecca, how could you commit such an unpardonable, gross breach of courtesy?

REBECCA.

Breach of courtesy? To an artist—to an opera singer? Ha! That is funny! Hah!

[Laughs; fans herself vigorously.]

JACOBSON.

Remember, the opera singer is the son of Sir John Cotswold.

REBECCA.

The stuck-up old spendthrift. He ought to be glad to have a son who can earn so much money for him.

JACOBSON.

[Comes to R. side of couch.] For years I've never spoken to you seriously. I've given you your own way completely, because you're my wife—the mother of my children. When you've made our family and our name ridiculous with your affectations, I never interfered. I said to myself, "It gives her pleasure; I'll bear the ridi-

cule." You bring an adventurer, like this man Trevor, into my house and force him upon Esther. Now you insult the one man of all others whose feelings I most wish to spare—Sir John Cotswold. Isn't his position sufficiently painful without such a coarse, wanton humiliation?

REBECCA.

Isaac!

JACOBSON.

To-morrow my door is closed to Captain Trevor. In future you shall be accountable to me for your actions. I'll not have my name made a whipping-post for the jibes and sneers of our detractors by you.

REBECCA.

[*Emotionally.*] You've never spoken to me like this before.

JACOBSON.

That's where I've been wrong. [REBECCA *covers her eyes and cries, silently.* JACOBSON *looks at her a moment, unbends, then comes down to her quite tenderly.*] Don't do that, dear!

REBECCA.

I never thought! I never thought! I did it all for your sake—all for your sake.

JACOBSON.

[*Takes her hand.*] I know that, Rebecca—I said more than I should! The first angry word I've ever spoken to you. But since I was a child, I've always looked up to the Cotswolds. His father helped mine in a hundred ways when we were poor. Now that our positions have changed let us try to *help* Sir John—not *hurt* him. There, that's all past! Never an angry word again!

[*Patting her hand.*]

REBECCA.

[*Looking up at him.*] Isaac! Isaac![*Enter MAXIMILIAN with card on salver, R. arch, crossing down to L.*

JACOBSON.

[*To MAXIMILIAN.*] What is it?

MAXIMILIAN.

I was to tell Miss Jacobson first.

JACOBSON.

Tell her? What?

MAXIMILIAN.

When Sir John Cotswold called.

JACOBSON.

Sir John? [*Goes up, takes card from salver, looks at it.*]
You needn't tell my daughter—show Sir John up.[*Exit MAXIMILIAN.*

REBECCA.

[*Rises C.*] I can't see him like this.

JACOBSON.

Please do!

REBECCA.

But — !

JACOBSON.

I want you to.

[REBECCA *sits C.* *Enter MAXIMILIAN.*•

MAXIMILIAN.

Sir John Cotswold !

[Enter SIR JOHN, dressed exactly as he left the stage at the end of the first act, save for a new pair of gloves. He walks determinedly into the room, stops short when he sees REBECCA, bows deeply to her, then formally and frigidly to JACOBSON. Exit MAXIMILIAN, R. arch.]

JACOBSON.

[Pointing to chair.] Won't you ?

SIR JOHN.

Thank you—no ! I have called for one moment only—*one !* *[To REBECCA.]* Would I be asking too much if I begged the favor of speaking to your husband alone ?

REBECCA.

[Jumping up.] Certainly not, Sir John !

SIR JOHN.

I shall be greatly obliged.

REBECCA.

Delighted.

[Bowing to SIR JOHN, then goes R. SIR JOHN precedes her and goes to door R. ; opens it. SIR JOHN bows to her, as she exits, then he closes the door. He turns, comes R. C.]

JACOBSON.

Thank you !

[SIR JOHN stops, almost resenting " thanks," goes to Chesterfield, puts hat down, then gets envelope from his pocket.]

SIR JOHN.

And now, sir! [*Takes envelope from pocket, bank-note from envelope with his fingers, lets it flutter on the table, also envelope, then dusts his fingers.*] I beg to return that, if you please! [*Takes up hat from couch.*]

JACOBSON.

[*Astonished; looks at the note and then at SIR JOHN.*]
What do you mean?

SIR JOHN.

I mean that I have pocketed my pride sufficiently to call on you, sir, to settle our accounts.

JACOBSON.

Oh, I see. You wish to pay your rent.

SIR JOHN.

[*Loudly.*] No, sir. That I *never* pay! [*Pauses.*] My daughter attends to it.

JACOBSON.

[*Goes to table, picks up note.*] Then what does this mean?

SIR JOHN.

You know perfectly well what it means. It was in that envelope. Read it! Do you know the handwriting?

JACOBSON.

My wife's writing. Now I understand perfectly. Did your son commission you to call on me?

SIR JOHN.

Commission? Commission! I would have you know that I am not in the habit of allowing myself to be sent on commissions by any one. Not even by my son.

JACOBSON.

But how did you get this?

SIR JOHN.

[*Hesitatingly.*] My—a—my son was not in. I opened it—fortunately.

JACOBSON.

Indeed! You will forgive me saying it, but I am not accustomed to opening letters that are not addressed to me—even to my own son.

SIR JOHN.

[*Thoroughly angry.*] That—that is my affair. Luckily for you, sir, my son knows nothing of this insult.

JACOBSON.

I assure you —

SIR JOHN.

One moment, if you please. I stand before you as the head of the Cotswold family. Insults offered to any member of my family are offered to me.

JACOBSON.

But really, Sir John, my dear Sir John.

SIR JOHN.

You needn't lay so much stress on the *Sir*—I was *born* with it.

JACOBSON.

[*Quietly.*] I merely *earned* it.

SIR JOHN.

What? Earned? *Bought*, sir, *bought* and *paid* for. But let us finish this matter.

JACOBSON.

Please do.

[*Slightly bowing.*]

SIR JOHN.

[*Excitedly.*] Be good enough to understand that the son of Sir John Cotswold does not accept payment for the honor of his visit.

JACOBSON.

Neither does one pay Sir John Cotswold's son, but the artist, who also honors by accepting the invitation.

SIR JOHN.

You beg the question, sir. You juggle words. If my son should ever call on you—which I hope most emphatically he never will do—[JACOBSON *looks at door* L.; *smiles*] if he sings in your house—which is absolutely out of the question at any and all times—then he does so because it amuses him—*amuses*, sir—and not for *payment*. Do you grasp that, sir? If you do not then you are but little better than a —

JACOBSON.

[*Interrupting.*] Sir John! Let us try to keep this discussion within moderate bounds. [*With dignity.*] Please remember you are in my house.

SIR JOHN.

Ha! Just so. Exactly. *Your* house. You do well to remind me. And who built this house, sir? My father, sir. And who leased the smallest hovel on this estate for the purpose of making a wretched living out of equally wretched chairs, sir? *Your* father, sir! *Your* father!

JACOBSON.

[*With growing heat.*] And who owns the estate now?

SIR JOHN.

[*In white heat.*] You, sir, damme! You! And how? By what means? You got control of money—as your race always does—and you buy up by the most underhand —

JACOBSON.

Sir John!

SIR JOHN.

I repeat, you buy up in the most underhand, secret, and surreptitious way, the mortgages ill luck compelled me to encumber the estate with. And had I not in my contract expressly reserved the right to live as tenant in one of my houses, you would have driven me out of that.

JACOBSON.

[*Steps toward SIR JOHN, angered by the injustice of the insinuation.*] You are absolutely —

SIR JOHN.

Take care, sir! Take care!

JACOBSON.

[*Controlling himself.*] But I'm foolish to allow myself to be angry. Say what you please. You can't insult me. You can't be taken seriously.

SIR JOHN.

But I insist on being taken seriously. I want to insult you! You shall be angry! I've been angry for years! Yes, damme, sir, years! You not only get my estate but you buy up even my pictures! Look at that, sir! [*Pointing to picture on the wall R.*] My great, great-grandfather! Look at it! And blush—if your constitution and your skin will permit you such an emotion. You take everything you can from me. You even decoy my daughter's suitor, Captain Trevor. You buy even him!

JACOBSON.

[*Smiling.*] The purchase is not complete. I return him to you—debts and all.

SIR JOHN.

Stop, sir. You are flippant, sir. How dare you! I don't allow any one to be flippant in my presence.

JACOBSON.

[*Ironically.*] I beg your pardon.

SIR JOHN.

And now—*now!*—Not content with all you have done to harm and humiliate me with your ill-gotten money you must needs try to buy my son—buy a Cotswold for a hundred pounds. But you shall not! No, sir! I *may* be poor. I *am* poor! Honorably poor, and I would rather be honorably poor, sir, than *dishonorably* rich!

JACOBSON.

[*With dignity.*] Sir John Cotswold, you will oblige me by leaving this house.

SIR JOHN.

[*With a scream.*] What? Leave the house? You dare tell me—you—you—you——

[*Words fail him. As he stands face to face with JACOBSON, trembling with rage, almost about to strike him, enter CECIL and ESTHER, door L., engrossed with each other, laughing and talking merrily. As they see SIR JOHN and JACOBSON, they look at each other amazed.*

JACOBSON.

[*Quietly.*] Your son!

SIR JOHN.

[*Turning quickly; aghast.*] Cecil! You! *Here!*

CECIL.

Father!

JACOBSON.

Esther!

[*Motions her to leave the room. CECIL takes her to door. She exits L.*]

SIR JOHN.

[*To CECIL.*] How long have you been here, sir?

CECIL.

That's exactly what I was going to ask you. How do you do, Sir Isaac?

[*Crosses to JACOBSON, offering his hand.*]

SIR JOHN.

Don't touch his hand. I forbid you. We've been insulted, grossly insulted by this man. There, sir—look at it— [*Pointing to note.*] Look at it. The price of your degradation. Hired like a juggler at a fair!

CECIL.

My dear father, even if you do open letters that are addressed to me, please leave the answering of them to me.

SIR JOHN.

Very well. Give that man his answer. Now. He sends you one hundred pounds to sing to him on Sunday night!—Give him his answer!

CECIL.

[*To JACOBSON.*] Sir Isaac, I accept your invitation with my best thanks!

SIR JOHN.

What? You accept? And the money? You accept that too?

CECIL.

Certainly. It's my means of livelihood — [*Turning to* JACOBSON.] I accept not merely your invitation, but your payment, Sir Isaac. I know perfectly well the instinct that prompted your offer. It was one of kindness—not of insult, and I apologize to you for my father's attitude and speech.

SIR JOHN.

You? Apologize for me! After that—you—may go to the —

CECIL.

One moment, father. I wish you to hear this, too. [*To* JACOBSON.] Sir Isaac, I ask you for your daughter's hand. [*JACOBSON surprised.*]

SIR JOHN.

Cecil!

CECIL.

[*To* JACOBSON.] Have I your consent?

SIR JOHN.

You haven't mine, sir. Marry into this family? You do, sir, and I'll disown you. Marry that man's daughter and you never enter my house or look on my face again. Now choose.

CECIL.

My choice is made, father! With Sir Isaac's consent I wish to make Miss Jacobson my wife.

[*Turns to* JACOBSON.

SIR JOHN.

Very well. I leave you to your Jewish friends. To think that a Cotswold—a—a—a Cotswold—a—a — [*Breaks into hysterical laughter.* ULRICA and ADRIAN

walk in radiant and happy, absorbed in each other. SIR JOHN'S laughter arrests them. They look in amazement.]
Ulrica! What are you doing in this house?

ADRIAN.

[Entirely misreading the situation. Mistaking SIR JOHN'S laughter for friendliness, rushes forward.] My dear Sir John! *[Stretching out his hands.]* You are the one man of all men I most wish to see!

SIR JOHN.

[Hands behind his back.] Who are you, sir?

ADRIAN.

Adrian, Sir John! Adrian Jacobson! Oh, but I am glad you are here! Glad indeed to find you visiting my father in such a nice, friendly way.

SIR JOHN.

Friendly! Nice!

ADRIAN.

[Turning to SIR JOHN.] And I'll tell you why I'm glad. I am going to ask you the greatest favor one man can do another—to make his whole life happy. To make two people happy—Sir John, I want to marry your daughter. What do you say?

SIR JOHN.

[Beside himself.] Say! This, sir! This! I'd rather see her dead, sir. Yes, dead! My daughter? You! *[Looking at JACOBSON.]* His son! Ulrica—come here! *[ULRICA comes to his L.]* Never—never in my lifetime cross the threshold of this house again or speak to any member of this disgraceful family.

ULRICA.

Father!

ADRIAN.

Sir John!

SIR JOHN.

Silence! Come, Ulrica! [SIR JOHN takes ULRICA by her right hand; she is on his L. They cross behind couch R. ADRIAN sinks in chair L.; CECIL crosses up to back of his chair and consoles him, and crosses to back of sofa. JACOBSON steps up to back of small chair by table R.] Sir Isaac Jacobson, this I trust will be the last time I shall ever have the unpleasant necessity of speaking to you! Let me pay you a tribute! At least you are thorough. You would buy my family as you did my mortgages—behind my back. Well, sir, let me tell you this, you can buy my estate, my furniture, my pictures, everything that has value to me—even my son—but my daughter—[puts his right arm around her shoulder] you cannot buy! The one tie left me that you with all your money cannot break. The rest I leave in your hands!

[Turns with ULRICA to go.]

JACOBSON.

One moment! [ULRICA and SIR JOHN stop and turn.] You say I am thorough! You would rather see your daughter dead than a member of my family—I entirely agree with you, Sir John Cotswold! You echo exactly my own feelings! Such a marriage would be to me the profoundest humiliation! Have no fear! None of my family will ever mate with yours! And in this, believe me, I shall indeed be—thorough!

[SIR JOHN clutches ULRICA'S arm and almost staggers; they turn and walk up to R. arch. The Barcarolle is heard on piano off door L., with ESTHER softly singing. CECIL turns, looks at door as music starts. ADRIAN watches ULRICA off.]

SLOW CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE.—*Same as Act I. Three days later.*

[MARGARET is discovered at rise of curtain listening anxiously at the door of SIR JOHN'S room.
L. Enter ULRICA, C., with manuscripts.

ULRICA.

[*Looking at her mother reproachfully.*] Mother!

MARGARET.

[*Starting guiltily.*] He doesn't stir, dear.

ULRICA.

Let him alone.

[*Sits at writing table up R., and commences to work.*

MARGARET.

But suppose he's ill?

ULRICA.

His appetite is too good for him to be ill.

MARGARET.

[*Reproachfully.*] Ulrica!

ULRICA.

Now please, mother, I've no time to fret over my father's temper.

MARGARET.

[*Goes to chair l. of table, picks up needlework and sighs wearily.*] He must be ill. If he were well he wouldn't go to bed for days. [Sits.

ULRICA.

Don't take the least notice of him. He'll soon get up then. [*Works.*]

MARGARET.

He hasn't even had breakfast yet, dear, and it's almost dinner time. [*Stitches in silence ; starts, hurries to door L.*] Yes, John! [*Pause.*] Did you call? [*Listens.*]

ULRICA.

[*Turning.*] No, mother, he didn't.

MARGARET.

Sssh! [*Warning ULRICA as she listens.*] Vining is with him! [*Pause.*] He's having his breakfast. [*Pleased. SIR JOHN is heard scolding VINING heartily.*] I think he's better. His voice sounds stronger. [*SIR JOHN shouts.*] Much stronger! [*Pause.*] Vining is leaving him. [*Hurries to doors C., opens them, goes half-way out of room, beckons, calling in a low tone.*] Vining! Vining! [*Reënters, followed by VINING carrying breakfast tray. Eagerly.*] Well? Is he better?

VINING.

[*At door, shakes his head sadly.*] No, my lady, worse!

MARGARET.

What was the matter?

VINING.

The coffee, my lady. He said it was bitter.

MARGARET.

Couldn't he drink it?

VINING.

Yes, my lady. All of it.

ULRICA.

[To MARGARET.] See?

VINING.

He said the bacon was of another generation and wanted to know if we bought it where we bought our eggs.

MARGARET.

What is he doing now?

VINING.

Reading *The Times*, my lady.

MARGARET.

[*Wearily.*] That will do, Vining.

[*Exit* VINING, C. MARGARET *walks sadly back to chair L. of table, takes up her needlework, sighing deeply.*

ULRICA.

[*At writing table.*] What's the use of worrying, mother? He's done this *so* often before.

MARGARET.

I know. When Cecil went on the stage he stayed in bed for two weeks.

ULRICA.

Now that Cecil wants to *marry* he may stay in bed for a month.

MARGARET.

And you, my dear? He said you wanted to marry, too.

ULRICA.

Oh! He doesn't bother about me. He thinks that all he has to do is to forbid me.

MARGARET.

[*Sadly.*] It can't be healthy to lie there all day.

ULRICA.

We have only ourselves to blame. We've always spoiled him.

MARGARET.

[*Sighs.*] I know. Still he's —

ULRICA.

Don't try to excuse him, mother. I can't! He's tyrannized over me quite long enough. But no more!

[*Enter VINING, C. ; inside door.*

MARGARET.

[*Starting up nervously ; rises.*] What is it? Sssh! Speak softly.

VINING.

[*In a whisper.*] Mr. Lewis, my lady.

ULRICA.

My brother isn't here.

VINING.

[*In a whisper.*] He wants to see *you*, miss.

ULRICA.

Well, show him in.

[*Exit VINING.*

MARGARET.

What can he want?

ULRICA.

We'll soon know.

MARGARET.

[*Listening at door L.*] I hope he won't disturb John.
[*Enter VINING, C.*]

VINING.

[*In a whisper.*] Mr. Lewis.

LEWIS.

[*Entering with his usual boisterous manner.*] Ah!
Good-afternoon, ladies!

[*MARGARET and ULRICA make signs for silence. He pauses and looks from one to the other in perplexity, then goes to back of table and puts down hat.*]

MARGARET and ULRICA.

Sssh!

MARGARET.

My husband is ill! [Exit VINING, C.]

LEWIS.

Oh! I'm sorry. Sorry, indeed. Is it serious?

MARGARET.

We don't know yet.

LEWIS.

Is it infectious? [Takes up hat as if going.]

MARGARET.

[*Impatiently.*] Dear me, no.

[LEWIS shows relief and puts hat back on table.]

ULRICA.

[Turns to LEWIS.] My brother is staying at the Victoria.

LEWIS.

I know. I'm on my way to call on him. [*To MARGARET.*] You'll excuse me. [*Goes to ULRICA; hands her a letter and winks at her.*] Here!

ULRICA.

[*Rises, taking the letter.*] What is this?

LEWIS.

[*Winking.*] From next door.

ULRICA.

Next door?

LEWIS.

[*Following her, nods vigorously; chuckles and winks again.*] Mr. Adrian!

ULRICA.

[*By couch.*] For me?

LEWIS.

Rather. Got one for your brother from Miss Jacobson as well.

ULRICA.

[*Coldly.*] Indeed!

LEWIS.

There's been a pretty how-de-do in there, and no mistake. Sir Isaac's on *his* dignity now. Says his children mustn't visit here until Sir John's apologized.

ULRICA.

Who told you that?

LEWIS.

Mr. Adrian.

ULRICA.

Mother, did you hear Mr. Lewis's news?

MARGARET.

No, dear. What is it?

ULRICA.

Sir Isaac Jacobson declines to allow either Esther or Adrian to visit us until father apologizes.

MARGARET.

John! Apologize! Never! No matter how much he might be in the wrong!

LEWIS.

That's what I said. His pride. And I admire it. I do, indeed. And I admire Sir John! Rather! You know, Lady John—— [*Stare of surprise from MARGARET.*] I mean, Lady Cotswold—I think Sir John is one of the finest gentlemen—*real* gentlemen——

[*Loud ringing from room L.*

MARGARET.

Sssh!

[*Hurries to door L. and listens; louder ringing heard continuously.*

SIR JOHN.

[*Screaming from inside room.*] Why doesn't somebody come?

MARGARET.

I'm here, John. Do you want me?

SIR JOHN.

[*Inside room L.*] No! I don't! Who's in there?

[*MARGARET looks timidly at ULRICA.*

ULRICA.

[*In front of couch R., smiling.*] Tell him!

SIR JOHN.

[*Inside room L.*] Well? Can't you speak? Who's in there?

MARGARET.

Mr. Lewis, John!

[LEWIS *has very satisfied smile.*

SIR JOHN.

[*Inside room L.*] Lewis! Lewis! Outside with him!
Away with the Jews!

LEWIS.

[*Starting.*] Well, upon my —

SIR JOHN.

[*Inside room L.*] Do you *hear* me?

MARGARET.

I hear you, John!

SIR JOHN.

[*Inside room L.*] Send—him—away!

MARGARET.

Yes, John — [Pause.] John! [Pause.] John!

SIR JOHN.

[*Inside room L., mimicking her.*] John! John! What
do you want?

MARGARET.

Are you going to get up, dear?

SIR JOHN.

[*Inside room L., angrily.*] No, I'm not!

MARGARET.

[*Timidly.*] Do you want anything? [Pause.] John!
[Pause.] John!

SIR JOHN.

[*Inside room L., shouting.*] Go away!

MARGARET.

[*Sighs wearily, leaves the door.*] I'm very sorry, Mr. Lewis!

LEWIS.

Not at all. Very natural of Sir John. Very natural indeed.

MARGARET.

He's not well. [*Sits.*]

LEWIS.

Of course he isn't. [*Confidentially over table to her.*]
But, Lady Cotswold, I'm really not a ——

[*Loud ringing at street door-bell.*]

MARGARET.

[*Starting.*] Oh! What's going to happen now?

LEWIS.

[*Nervously.*] I think perhaps I'd better go.
[*Picks up hat and gloves and goes up c.*]

ULRICA.

[*Goes toward him.*] Thank you very much for calling. I'm sorry you should have had such a reception.

LEWIS.

I quite understand. Pride! I know. [ULRICA goes up to writing table; LEWIS follows.] But, Miss Cotswold, I'm not really a ——

[*Enter CECIL, c.*]

CECIL.

[*Comes down c.*] Hello, Lewis!

MARGARET.

Sssh! Please—your father ——

CECIL.

[*Turns to LEWIS.*] I want to see you later. Meet me at the Victoria, will you? Better still, pick me up here in half an hour.

LEWIS.

[*By door c.*] Right!

CECIL.

Sorry to turn you out, but I've something very important and very *private* to do here first.

LEWIS.

[*At door, winks at him and hands him letter.*] Here! I've got something for you!

CECIL.

Eh?

LEWIS.

[*In his ear.*] From Esther! [CECIL *takes the letter; looks at him in amazement.* LEWIS, *with finger on his lips; in door.*] Mum's the word! [*Opens door; to ULRICA.*] Miss Cotswold, you know I'm really a Presbyterian. [*Exit, c.*]

CECIL.

[*Puts letter in pocket without opening it.*] Is father still in bed? [*Comes down c.*]

MARGARET.

[*Sighs.*] Yes.

CECIL.

He must *get up!*

MARGARET.

[*Alarmed; rises.*] Cecil!

CECIL.

Now there's no help for it. He's got to.

ULRICA.

What is the matter?

CECIL.

[*Takes out note-case and counts notes.*] First of all, here's fifty pounds. [*Puts it on table.*] That will pay our arrears in rent.

MARGARET.

[*Joyfully.*] Oh! I'm *so* glad! Thank you, Cecil. That's been worrying me day and night.

CECIL.

Don't thank me, mother. I've a great deal to pay back yet, haven't I, Ulrica?

ULRICA.

Cecil!

CECIL.

[*Going quickly toward door L.*] Now for it!

MARGARET.

[*Rushing between him and the door.*] No! Cecil! Don't! Please!

CECIL.

[*Gently taking her away from the door and putting her on his R.*] Nonsense, mother! It's got to be done. Let us get it over at once.

MARGARET.

Oh—but ——

[*Gesture of appeal.*]

ULRICA.

Let him alone, mother!

[Smiling. MARGARET wrings her hands in misery.

CECIL.

[Knocking at door L.] Father! [Pause. Knocks again.] Father! [Pause. Knocks and calls loudly and rattles locked door.] Father! Open the door! [CECIL, MARGARET and ULRICA stand listening. The doors C. open quietly and SIR JOHN enters fully dressed. He stands looking grimly at the three backs. CECIL beating at the door violently.] Father!

SIR JOHN.

[Up by door C., smiling amiably.] Yes, my boy, what is it?

[All three start, turn, look at SIR JOHN in amazement.

MARGARET.

[With a gasp.] John!

SIR JOHN.

Yes, my dear?

MARGARET.

You are up?

SIR JOHN.

No, my dear! I'm *in bed* in there! [ULRICA and CECIL exchange glances and smile.] What's all this racket about? [Coming down to back of table.] Eh? [Sees money on the table.] Hello! Money! Money, eh?

[Takes it up.

CECIL.

Yes, father!

SIR JOHN.

[*Counts it.*] Fifty pounds. I never come into this room now but I find money lying about. Who brought this?

CECIL.

[*Steps to MARGARET's side.*] I did, father!

SIR JOHN.

Indeed! [*Crosses to couch R., handing it to ULRICA, as he crosses.*] Kindly give it back to him. We don't want it. Money, indeed! From him! Pah! [*Sits couch R.*

ULRICA.

[*C.*] It's for the rent we owe.

[*MARGARET sits in chair R. of table.*

SIR JOHN.

Rent? What rent?

MARGARET.

Ulrica!

ULRICA.

Be quiet, mother. [*To SIR JOHN.*] We have not paid any rent for over six months.

SIR JOHN.

And *why* not?

ULRICA.

Because we had no money to pay it with.

SIR JOHN.

[*Angrily.*] No money. *No* —? Why didn't you come to me?

ULRICA.

Because you hadn't any either.

SIR JOHN.

Well? And what of *that*? I could get some, couldn't I?

ULRICA.

Where could you get it?

SIR JOHN.

[*Confused and irritated.*] Eh? What? That is my affair. This is inexcusable! Disgraceful! [*Rises.*] How dare you allow me—*me* to owe money to Mr. Jacobson!

CECIL.

Sir Isaac Jacobson, father.

SIR JOHN.

Very well! Sir Isaac Jacobson! This is extremely painful! It is bitter! Very bitter! Especially just now after what I said to him—a few days ago!

ULRICA.

I asked you not to call on him—a few days ago.

SIR JOHN.

Why didn't he say something about it then?

ULRICA.

Because he wished to spare your feelings.

SIR JOHN.

Spare my fiddlesticks! He wanted to humiliate me. Well, he succeeded! I *am* humiliated! Bitterly humiliated! [*Suddenly hurries across energetically round back of table to bell. Rings.*] This must be settled at once! At once!

CECIL.

There are more things to be settled than that, father!

SIR JOHN.

One thing at a time—if you please. [VINING enters c.]
Vining, there's fifty pounds. Take it at once to Mr.
Jacobson.

CECIL.

Sir!

SIR JOHN.

[Catches CECIL'S eye; glares indignantly.] Ha—Sir
Isaac Jacobson, and pay the rent. And say that we are
sorry—extremely sorry—it has been overlooked so long.
Hurry with it.

VINING.

[Takes the money which ULRICA hands him.] Very
well, Sir John! [Goes up c.]

SIR JOHN.

Vining! [VINING turns.] Don't forget to ask for a
receipt.

VINING.

Yes, Sir John.

[Exit, c.]

SIR JOHN.

[Relieved; sits R. of table.] Good! That's settled!
If I'd been told sooner it would have been paid sooner.
Ulrica, kindly remember we owe your brother fifty
pounds.

CECIL.

I owe Ulrica considerably more.

MARGARET.

Cecil! Please! Don't!

CECIL.

But I do owe it. Father might just as well know
everything now.

SIR JOHN.

I should appreciate such a wide knowledge extremely. *Everything*, my boy. However miserable or bitter! Out with it! Spare me nothing!

CECIL.

My studies cost a great deal of money, father!

SIR JOHN.

I know it. A great deal of money. They were paid for, weren't they?

CECIL.

Yes, they were. But what you were kind enough to spare was not sufficient—so—so Ulrica gave up her little fortune for me and without my knowledge.

SIR JOHN.

What? [*Pauses, thinks, smiles at her.*] That was good of you, Ulrica! Charming of you! Kind of you! I'm glad to know it! Quite glad! Yes, quite glad! [*Pauses; rises.*] Cecil, my boy, I withdraw my objection to your singing. Sing by all means! Make money by it. And pay back your sister. [*Beams on them.*] There! Now! Am I always disagreeable?

[*Sits again, takes cigar from box. MARGARET and ULRICA at first surprised and then delighted, turn and kiss one another.*]

CECIL.

I am glad to have your sanction at last.

SIR JOHN.

You've got it! All over! No bitterness! Do what you please! Anything, anything, anything!

[*Striking match.*]

CECIL.

But now comes the most important thing of all.

[*ULRICA has her arm around MARGARET; they both listen attentively and in surprise.*]

SIR JOHN.

Something else ?

CECIL.

Yes. Ulrica's little legacy was insufficient. More money was needed to keep me abroad.

SIR JOHN.

And where did you get that ? Borrowed it ?

CECIL.

No. Some one gave it voluntarily.

SIR JOHN.

Gave it ! Oho ! Really ? One of my family ? That's funny ! Damn funny ! Which one ?

CECIL.

None of our family, father.

SIR JOHN.

I'm very glad. I hate 'em all. Wouldn't accept a favor from any of 'em. Who gave it to you, my boy ?

CECIL.

[*Pause.*] Sir Isaac Jacobson.

SIR JOHN.

[*Rises and stares at CECIL. ULRICA and MARGARET rise slowly, thoroughly frightened.*] What !

CECIL.

I didn't know it at the time. Lewis arranged it for me. He heard me sing at Munich. I was absolutely strapped for money, hadn't a penny in the world. He said that he knew a rich man who had done a great deal for young, struggling artists and singers. He'd bring my case under his notice. He did. Sir Isaac advanced the money. Through him I'm where I am to-day.

SIR JOHN.

[*Shrinks abashed, his figure dwindles; all the fire and pride goes out of his figure and voice. After a pause, in a low voice.*] How much?

CECIL.

A thousand pounds.

SIR JOHN.

[*He sinks in chair, his head falls on his breast, his fingers twitching; he sits and feebly beats his knee with his clenched fist.*] My God! My God!

[*MARGARET crosses to back of SIR JOHN'S chair, and stands solicitously near him, watching him, hand on his shoulder for a moment. CECIL comes to R. of MARGARET to comfort her. ULRICA turns R. by piano. SIR JOHN suddenly straightens up; the life comes back to him, he rises decidedly, crosses round front of table and rings.*

MARGARET.

[*At back of table, timidly, as his hand touches bell-rope.*] John, what are you going to do?

SIR JOHN.

[*At bell.*] Do? What should I do? That money must be repaid at once. [*Comes round to R. of table.*] I'll not sleep one night in that man's debt.

CECIL.

[*Behind chair R. of table; quietly.*] Father! Surely that is my business.

SIR JOHN.

You are my son. I should have provided enough money for your education. Where is Vining?

[*Rings again.*

MARGARET.

You sent him with the rent.

SIR JOHN.

Next door. It shouldn't take all day.

CECIL.

[Comes down L. of SIR JOHN.] Father! It's my debt. I'll repay it.

SIR JOHN.

Tshist! I allow no man to meddle in my affairs.

CECIL.

But remember—two days ago, you *disowned* me!

SIR JOHN.

And I will, if you marry that man's daughter.

[Enter VINING.]

VINING.

[Breathlessly.] The receipt, Sir John!

[Puts it on the table.]

SIR JOHN.

Ha! One debt removed! Now for the other! Vining, my hat, my gloves, my cane. At once.

VINING.

Yes, Sir John.

[Hurries out C.]

SIR JOHN.

What did that man mean by lending you money? How dare he lend you money? Mark my words, there was some object behind all this. Mark my words.

ULRICA.

It is only one of his many kindly acts.

SIR JOHN.

[*Turning to her.*] Kindly—rubbish! I don't want his kindness. Oh, no! There's something more. For months he asks for no rent. Why? He sacrifices a thousand pounds for my son's education. My son's! And then he allows me to insult him in his own house! Why? Why? I tell you the man is sinister!

MARGARET.

[*Agreeing with SIR JOHN.*] It is certainly strange!

SIR JOHN.

Strange? It's inconceivable. It's—it's—bitter—bitter— Well! [*Squaring his shoulders.*] It remains for me to lift this mountain of debt. By to-night every pound, shilling and penny will be repaid.

ULRICA.

Where will you get it?

CECIL.

Yes, father, where?

SIR JOHN.

Where? Where? There are a million Jews in London lending money. Is there not one amongst 'em who will lend Sir John Cotswold a thousand pounds? If he gets twelve hundred in return? Eh? Ha! I know 'em. They'll jump at me! Jump!

[ULRICA and CECIL exchange glances.]

MARGARET.

[*Rises.*] Oh, but John—

ULRICA.

[*At same time.*] Father!

CECIL.

[*At same time.*] No one will lend you—

SIR JOHN.

Silence!

CECIL.

But, father, what security can you offer them?

[Enter VINING, with hat, gloves and cane, which he gives to SIR JOHN, then returns to door and holds it open.]

SIR JOHN.

My *name!* It is good yet, sir. There is no stain on it so far. My *name!* [Exits erect and dignified.]

MARGARET.

[Following him out.] John! John!

[VINING follows her and closes door. CECIL is standing by chair R. of table, back to audience.]

ULRICA.

[Comes C. CECIL turns as she speaks.] It is war between the families now, Cecil. No more visits next door!

CECIL.

How do you know?

ULRICA.

Read your letter.

CECIL.

Eh? Oh!

[Takes out letter, sits R. of table and opens it.]

ULRICA.

Don't pretend you'd forgotten it.

CECIL.

[Laughs.] I hadn't. I've been longing to read it. May I?

ULRICA.

Of course.

[*Watches him as he reads.*]

CECIL.

[*Glances quickly through it.*] By George, you're right, but how did you ——? [ULRICA *holds up her letter.*] From Adrian? [She *nods.*] What rot!

ULRICA.

Isn't it?

CECIL.

Father's got to apologize. That's all.

ULRICA.

[*Shakes her head.*] He won't!

CECIL.

Then I'll do it for him! If it comes really to Hecuba, I'll carry Esther off in spite of both of 'em and marry her under their very noses.

ULRICA.

What's to become of me?

CECIL.

You do the same thing.

ULRICA.

Carry Adrian off?

CECIL.

[*Laughs.*] Why not? [Sudden thought.] I've got it! Let's have them both in!

ULRICA.

Here!

CECIL.

Certainly. Write a note to Adrian —— [ULRICA *goes up l. toward writing-table.* CECIL *crosses to bell.*] I'll send it in by Vining.

ULRICA.

[*At table.*] But will they come?

CECIL.

Come? Of course they'll come! [*Rings bell.*] Hurry up! Quickly as you can. [*Crosses to window. ULRICA sits and opens drawer for paper.*] By George—they're going out together! Where's Vining? [*Enter VINING C. CECIL goes across to him. ULRICA rises.*] Vining! Quickly! Mr. and Miss Jacobson have just gone out—run after them—tell them to come here—most important—say it's life and death—run! [*Hurrying him out C. CECIL runs to the bay window; excitedly.*] They're at the corner. They've just turned. Where's Vining? There he goes! Well, I'm — Call that running? Go on! Go on! He's round the corner!

ULRICA.

But Cecil! Suppose father comes back while they're here?

CECIL.

All the better. We've got to clear all this nonsense up some time. Here they come!

ULRICA.

[*By door C., excitedly.*] I'll run and tidy up.

CECIL.

[*Goes to her.*] Don't bother about tidying up. [*Suddenly.*] This is the first room father would come to, isn't it?

ULRICA.

Yes.

CECIL.

Very well. Leave this room to me.

ULRICA.

To you?

CECIL.

You go into the library. I'll send Adrian in to you.

[Runs to ULRICA and opens door C.

ULRICA.

But I *must* tidy up.

CECIL.

Don't bother about tidying up! Hurry!

ULRICA.

But—but —

CECIL.

And don't stand there but-butting—get out! [CECIL hands her out, closes door and then walks down C. "tidying up," brushing his clothes, smoothing his hair, arranging tie, etc.] The time women waste "tidying up"! It's ridiculous! [Turns and is facing door C. Door C. opens; enter VINING, who shows in ESTHER and ADRIAN and exits.] Come in. How are you?

[Shakes hands with them and they all come down,

ESTHER R. of CECIL, ADRIAN L. of CECIL.

ADRIAN.

What has —?

ESTHER.

Yes—how did you —?

CECIL.

Why, you see my father's —

ADRIAN and ESTHER.

Yes —

CECIL.

Gone to—to—well, he'll be away a long time. See? Sit down. So I thought—that is, my sister and I thought—that we might have a little cabinet meeting. Eh? To decide on our plan of campaign. What do you think?

ESTHER.

Splendid! But our fathers —

CECIL.

We've simply got to leave our fathers entirely out of the question; for a while at least. This is an age of children. Fathers have had their innings. Now it's *our* turn.

ADRIAN.

But Ulrica — ?

CECIL.

[*Turns to ADRIAN.*] Exactly. Ulrica's the very person to talk it over with. The very person. Suppose you go into the library and join her? [*Takes ADRIAN up to door c.*] Eh? And I'll stay here and thrash it out with Esther. What? [*CECIL walks ADRIAN up to door c., passing him out.*] See that door in front of you? Just turn the handle and walk in. That's it. Don't knock. Come back by and by. Don't hurry, though.

[*Closes door c.; comes down to couch.*]

ESTHER.

[*Sitting c. of couch.*] Oh, but I feel this is very wrong.

CECIL.

You being here ?

ESTHER.

What would my father say ?

CECIL.

I don't know.

ESTHER.

What will your father say ?

CECIL.

I don't care.

ESTHER.

But you must care.

CECIL.

Not a bit. Do you know what I'll do if they go on rowing with each other? [*Leaning over couch.*]

ESTHER.

What?

CECIL.

Get a special license and marry you one morning before either of 'em are up, and then stroll in to breakfast here and next door and say, "Hello, here we are! Married! What? Bless us!" [*Sits.*] What do you think of that? Do you like that?

ESTHER.

Will you?

CECIL.

Yes, I will.

ESTHER.

Oh, that's lovely! Cecil! Father didn't send you that hundred pounds. It was mother.

CECIL.

For goodness' sake, let us forget all about it.

ESTHER.

I gave mother my opinion pretty freely just now. She's caused all the trouble. Just think—father defended her. He said a daughter shouldn't criticize her parents. Isn't that ridiculous?

CECIL.

Absolutely.

ESTHER.

It's so old-fashioned.

CECIL.

Decidedly.

ESTHER.

I think parents are growing more and more impossible, don't you?

CECIL.

Entirely.

ESTHER.

They seem to think it's a sin to be a child.

CECIL.

Dreadful! Dreadful! I wonder if we shall be like that—as parents?

ESTHER.

Certainly not. My children shall do just as they like—in reason.

CECIL.

And their father? Won't he have anything to say?

ESTHER.

Yes. Now and again! But men don't really understand these things. They'd much better leave them to the mothers—because — [She catches his eye; bows her head; blushes.] Oh, I shouldn't be talking like this—to you.

CECIL.

Esther.

[Bending over her.]

ESTHER.

[*Faces him.*] Cecil! Really? Do you—love me?

CECIL.

No. I hate you.

ESTHER.

[*Rises, goes C. ; turns.*] Fancy you loving me!

CECIL.

[*Rises.*] Isn't it extraordinary?

ESTHER.

I don't believe it.

CECIL.

It isn't true, either. It — [*Is about to embrace her—
bell rings. They break apart in alarm.*] Father!

ESTHER.

[*Alarmed.*] Oh! But, Adrian —

CECIL.

Adrian's all right. He's in the library. Father will come here first.

ESTHER.

Oh, what can we do?

CECIL.

Do? Nothing. Stay where you are!

ESTHER.

Oh, but —

CECIL.

Not a word! Cling to me! [*Enter VINING, C.*

VINING.

Mr. Lewis.

[CECIL and ESTHER laugh; enter LEWIS.

LEWIS.

[Comes down C.; stops short when he sees them.] Oh
—may I? [Exit VINING, C.

CECIL.

Certainly you may.

LEWIS.

[Puts his hat on table.] It's business.

CECIL.

All right. Fire away.

LEWIS.

[Comes C.] Before Miss —?

CECIL.

Why not? [Whispers in LEWIS' ear.

LEWIS.

Eh? [CECIL whispers again.] Really? No! You're
not? Are you? Bravo! You're a wonder!
[Shakes his hand warmly.

CECIL.

Thank you, Lewis.

LEWIS.

[Crosses to ESTHER; shakes her hands warmly.] My
very warmest—for both of you.

ESTHER.

Thank you, Mr. Lewis.

CECIL.

Now to business.

LEWIS.

Here we are. [*Taking out telegram.*] Paris! Peters-
burg! Vienna! Warsaw! Berlin—they all want you.

ESTHER.

[*Rises, alarmed.*] Oh, no! Not now!

LEWIS.

Not now? Eh?

CECIL.

[*To LEWIS.*] You'll get your commission all right!

ESTHER.

Stay in London, Cecil!

CECIL.

Oh, no, the season's too short, my dear. [*Crosses to*
ESTHER.] We'll take all the engagements. Anywhere.
Everywhere! All over the world. *We, my dear, we!*
[*Enter ADRIAN and ULRICA C. ESTHER joins*
ULRICA *back of couch.*

LEWIS.

[*With easy familiarity; shakes finger at ADRIAN.*] Ah!

ADRIAN.

[*Comes down C.; indignantly.*] What do you mean by
"Ah"?

LEWIS.

We've caught you!

ADRIAN.

Shut up. [*To CECIL.*] We've made up our minds.
If there are any more obstacles put in our way, we'll just
marry and be hanged to them. [*They shake hands.*

CECIL.

Splendid! [*Enter MARGARET, C. door.*]

LEWIS.

[*Slaps ADRIAN on the shoulder.*] Well spoken! Bravo!

ADRIAN.

[*Irritably.*] Shut up, Lewis!

MARGARET.

[*To ESTHER, who is standing above ULRICA at back of couch.*] My dear!

[*CECIL turns up as MARGARET enters.*]

CECIL.

This is Adrian Jacobson, mother.

MARGARET.

I'm very pleased to meet you. [*Then looks in amazement at the whole gathering.*] Has your father returned?

ULRICA.

No.

MARGARET.

I do hope nothing has happened.

ULRICA.

A great deal has happened in his absence, mother. Cecil and I have made up our minds. The rein of tyranny is over. We're going to be married!

MARGARET.

Married!

ULRICA.

There's my future husband.

CECIL.

And there's my future wife.

MARGARET.

[*Wringing her hands.*] But your father? [*Loud ringing heard.*] Here he is!

[*All turn back to audience simultaneously and look at door C. General scene of suspense and excitement. Positions from L. to R. LEWIS, ADRIAN down stage, CECIL, MARGARET, ULRICA and ESTHER above sofa.*]

CECIL.

[*Straightening up a little; nervously.*] All the better.
[*All turn and face audience.*]

ULRICA.

[*With great show of bravery and thin trembling little voice.*] I'm glad!

ESTHER.

[*Comes to L., back of couch, very frightened; to ADRIAN.*] Let us go!

ADRIAN.

[*By chair R. of table.*] Certainly not! We'll stay!

CECIL.

[*Crosses to LEWIS.*] Don't you think you'd better go?

LEWIS.

Why? Why?

CECIL.

[*Front of table.*] Well, you know he hates —
[*Checks himself.*]

LEWIS.

You forget, Cotswold! I'm a Presbyterian!

[*Handle of door turns; all turn, face door. Enter SIR JOHN, C. He is white, angry, dejected;*]

he looks from one to the other furiously. MARGARET and ULRICA are behind couch, ESTHER L., ADRIAN by chair R. of table, CECIL and LEWIS front of table.

SIR JOHN.

[*Throws up his hands.*] A synagogue!

[*After pause, starts to go to couch R.*

LEWIS.

[*Breaks the situation; goes around L. of table as if to go to SIR JOHN. Easily and jauntily.*] Ah, my dear Sir John —

[*SIR JOHN ignores him, walks right through group, sits down on Chesterfield, looks straight before him, talks to himself and beats his knee with his clenched fist. He looks very frail and feeble. MARGARET and ULRICA are at back of couch; ADRIAN joins ESTHER.*

CECIL.

[*Follows LEWIS around table, gives him his hat.*] I'll see you to-night.

LEWIS.

[*Going.*] Right! The old gentleman's not well.

CECIL.

I'm afraid not.

LEWIS.

I'm sorry. Good-night. [*In a whisper to the others.*] Good-bye. [*To ADRIAN and ESTHER and ULRICA, making a benediction with his hand.*] Bless you.

[*Exit, C.*

CECIL.

[*To ESTHER, by door in whisper.*] Go in next door and wait for me. Take Adrian with you. I'll call in by and by.

ESTHER.

[*In whisper.*] But you won't be allowed in!

CECIL.

I'll see to that. [*Amid much whispering and leave-taking, ADRIAN and ESTHER creep out C. ULRICA pushes them off. MARGARET stands near SIR JOHN, afraid to speak to him. CECIL motions ULRICA to speak. She shakes her head, smiles.*] Speak to him!

ULRICA.

[*R. of CECIL in whisper.*] No. You speak! Go on!

SIR JOHN.

That's right! Whisper! Whisper behind my back. Conspirators! All of you. [*To MARGARET.*] Have they gone?

MARGARET.

[*At back of couch.*] Yes, John.

SIR JOHN.

Can I breathe Christian air again?

MARGARET.

Yes, John, dear; yes.

SIR JOHN.

Thank goodness.

MARGARET.

Did they lend you the money, dear?

SIR JOHN.

[*Angrily.*] No, they did not. Never speak of money before me again! I've done with it. Pah! I spent the whole of this time running over the town abasing myself before usurers—leeches. For whom? My son! To pay his debts!

MARGARET.

Oh, John!

SIR JOHN.

[*Mimicking her.*] Oh, John! What kind of treatment did I get? Would they let me have the money? Oh, yes! They'd let me have it. But on what conditions? A Mr. Levy was prepared to oblige me with a thousand pounds if I paid him back two thousand! Another honest thief offered me five hundred in cash, and the remaining five hundred in a bicycle, a baby carriage and a sewing-machine. Then when I agreed to their terms they would not let me have it without security. But the awful part was that the worst of the Jews was no Jew at all, but a genuine, pure-blooded rascally Christian. That was bitter—bitter!

ULRICA.

[*With determination, comes down c. ; faces SIR JOHN.*] Father, why not look the truth in the face? [MARGARET makes a movement as if to stop her.] We have gone down, down, down in the world. And entirely through you.

SIR JOHN.

How dare you?

ULRICA.

Don't shout at me, father. You've done that so often that I don't mind it now. It is entirely through you that we are in the wretched position we are in to-day. Your reckless expenditures did that. You never understood figures.

SIR JOHN.

Thank God!

ULRICA.

And that very ignorance brought us to want. Absolute want.

SIR JOHN.

Want! Want! What do you mean?

ULRICA.

Oh, you never noticed it. You never would because we took care you shouldn't. But mother and I have with our own work provided the necessities of life for months past, and now when things are mending through Cecil, you try to make fresh trouble for us.

SIR JOHN.

You've provided the necessities?

ULRICA.

Yes.

[SIR JOHN *sits nervously beating his knee and twitching.*

CECIL.

[*Comes L. of ULRICA ; cheerily.*] Come! Come! That is all past. We'll never speak of anything unpleasant like that again! Congratulate me, father!

SIR JOHN.

Congratulate you?

CECIL.

On my engagement!

SIR JOHN.

You are engaged!

CECIL.

Just now—here!

SIR JOHN.

Here?

ULRICA.

[*Defiantly.*] And I'm engaged, too.

SIR JOHN.

You?

ULRICA.

Just now. In the library.

SIR JOHN.

To ——?

ULRICA.

Adrian Jacobson!

CECIL.

Esther Jacobson! [SIR JOHN rises, stands erect; his lips move, but no sound comes.] We've made up our minds. Ulrica has given her youth to you and to her home. It isn't fair. She ought to have a chance of being happy.

SIR JOHN.

With a Jew?

ULRICA.

I love him.

SIR JOHN.

And my son—with a Jewess?

CECIL.

I love her!

SIR JOHN.

Children of Jacobson!

CECIL.

I reverence him!

SIR JOHN.

Never—never with my consent.

CECIL.

But you've always liked Esther.

SIR JOHN.

She is the daughter of my enemy.

ULRICA.

If you knew Adrian better you'd love him as a son.

SIR JOHN.

[*Turns to MARGARET at back of couch.*] Margaret! Say something. After all, you're their mother. Speak!

MARGARET.

[*At back of couch: terrified.*] Yes—I will—I—if you—that is—I don't know.

SIR JOHN.

Well, after that clear and well-defined expression of opinion there is nothing more to be said except—this. [CECIL and ULRICA have their backs to audience, facing SIR JOHN.] You ask me to give my consent to your marrying into Mr. Jacobson's family. Here is my answer. No! No! No! No!

[*He is going to door L.* CECIL approaches him.

CECIL.

[*As SIR JOHN reaches door.*] Well, give us at least one good reason?

SIR JOHN.

[*By door L.*] It is enough that I forbid you.

ULRICA.

Father, all my life I've obeyed you. When you've been harsh, I've borne it without a word. But I love Adrian. I love him. My whole happiness is bound up in him. Do you want me to sacrifice that as well as my youth? Do you? If you do I will, only—only —

[Covers her face with her hands and breaks down.]

SIR JOHN.

[First of all trembles with rage; then it gradually leaves him; his erect stature shrinks; his voice from the harsh tone of temper modulates to the pathetic break of old age; he moves to ULRICA.] Ulrica! I see now! I see I've never been quite fair to you. Never quite fair. My dear, I'm sorry. Very sorry! But don't—don't—do this thing! And you, Cecil — [CECIL steps down; faces SIR JOHN.] I no longer command my boy. I plead! Yes—plead to my own children. Don't—don't do it. At least—not—not while I'm alive. Wait—it won't be long. Not long. To-day, now—I feel very—very old. Time's hand is heavy on me. Ulrica! Won't you at least pity me?

ULRICA.

[Turns to him; all compassion.] Father!

SIR JOHN.

Can't you see—just a little—with my old eyes? Stripped of everything—by one man—not of our race. If you and Cecil do this, every one would laugh at me—and I couldn't bear that. [Pause.] If you must—wait until I'm no longer here to feel the shame. That's all. That's all! [Tears come to his eyes; he brushes the back of his hand across his eyes; his voice fails.] That's all. —

[Totters out L. MARGARET sobs.]

ULRICA.

[Looks at CECIL.] He's right.

CECIL.

Ulrica!

ULRICA.

I couldn't do it now.

CECIL.

But —

ULRICA.

We must face our duty. You must, too. Yes, you must. We would never have a moment's happiness. At least I never would. I'd always see my father's face and hear his voice as he stood there pleading to us.

CECIL.

You'll give up everything?

ULRICA.

My place is beside my father. I'll stay beside him.

CECIL.

You're right, Ulrica. You're always right. But Esther—Adrian?

ULRICA.

We must tell them frankly.

CECIL.

When?

ULRICA.

Now. [*Crossing to MARGARET.*] Don't cry, mother. Never cry again. You'll never hear a word of reproach or bitterness from me—come, mother dear.

[*Kisses her.*]

MARGARET.

My darling!

ULRICA.

Rest here, mother dear, until we come back.

[CECIL has gone slowly up to door C. Opens it.

MARGARET.

You are going out?

ULRICA.

We're going—next door. [Turns up to CECIL.

CECIL

You've made up your mind?

ULRICA.

Absolutely. And so have you, Cecil. Our first duty is to our family. Come, let us face it out.

CECIL.

I can't tell Esther.

ULRICA.

You must! Just as I'll tell Adrian—never to think of me or speak to me again. [Her lips quiver.

CECIL.

[Takes her in his arms.] My poor Ulrica!

ULRICA.

Don't pity me. Help me to be brave—come!

[Exeunt ULRICA and CECIL C. "Salut d'Amour" is heard outside window on string orchestra. VINING enters C. with lamp. Closes door and crosses to piano.

MARGARET.

What is that music, Vining?

VINING.

[By piano. Places lamp on piano.] Oh, that's a band in the street, my lady.

MARGARET.

Close the window, Vining. [*As VINING closes window the music sinks to piano. MARGARET glances toward door L., then goes to door C., opens it and turns to VINING.*] If Sir John should ask, say I've gone next door.

[*Exit, leaving door open. VINING exits, closing door. After a pause door opens L. SIR JOHN looks in. All through the act the light has gradually been fading. It is now almost dark.*]

SIR JOHN.

Any one there? [*Goes to door C., opens it, listens, calls.*] Margaret — [*Louder.*] Margaret. Why doesn't some one answer? [*Excitedly.*] Margaret! [*Runs to door R., opens it. Enter VINING, C., with lamp. Turns quickly.*] Who's that?

VINING.

It's me, Sir John.

[*Puts lamp on sideboard and goes down to door L.*]

SIR JOHN.

Vining. [*VINING stops.*] Where's Lady Cotswold?

VINING.

Gone next door, Sir John.

SIR JOHN.

What! [*Pause.*] Where's Miss Ulrica?

VINING.

Gone next door, Sir John.

SIR JOHN.

And Mr. Cecil?

VINING.

Gone next door, Sir John.

SIR JOHN.

[*Pause.*] That'll do. [*Bell off R. Exit VINING.*] So I pleaded in vain! My last appeal—my last.

[*Reënter VINING.*]

VINING.

Sir Isaac Jacobson, Sir John.

SIR JOHN.

Sir Isaac! [*Pause.*] Show him in.

[*Exit VINING C.; leaves door open. VINING stands in hall, shows in JACOBSON, and closes door after JACOBSON'S entrance. The two men bow.*]

JACOBSON.

Do I intrude?

SIR JOHN.

Pray be seated.

[*Indicates chair.*]

JACOBSON.

[*Moves down R. C., a little below SIR JOHN. Still standing.*] Two days ago you pocketed your pride to call on me. I have pocketed mine in coming here—now.

[*Pause.*]

SIR JOHN.

I'm entirely at your service.

JACOBSON.

Firstly, I wish to apologize.

SIR JOHN.

Apologize! You!

JACOBSON.

For my discourtesy two days ago.

SIR JOHN.

The discourtesy was mine. I said certain things—I was hasty—I—something I've never done before—I desire to apologize—to you. I *do* apologize. There—I've said it. [*Pause.*] It's bitter! Bitter!

JACOBSON.

You don't understand.

SIR JOHN.

I insist on apologizing. I admit it—I was—a *little* unreasonable.

JACOBSON.

Sir John!

SIR JOHN.

Since then I've learned something that has affected me deeply. My son tells me of his indebtedness—your generosity. It is to you he owes his success. To you he owes one thousand pounds.

JACOBSON.

Please.

SIR JOHN.

Oh, I'm not going to give it to you! No! I've not got it! I can't get it. Only to-day I learned that my name isn't worth it. [*Pause.*] All I can tender you is my gratitude.

JACOBSON.

Please don't. I never meant you should know. I asked your son not to let you know. [*Pause.*] May I tell you my second reason for calling?

SIR JOHN.

It you please.

JACOBSON.

Your children are with mine. They are miserably unhappy. Mine are very dear to me, Sir John. They love yours — [*Pause.*] I'm prepared to withdraw what I said two days ago, to sink my own feelings. [*Pause.*] Shall we let them suffer for our unreasoning prejudices?

SIR JOHN.

My children know my wishes.

JACOBSON.

And they're prepared to respect them!

SIR JOHN.

Good.

JACOBSON.

You won't give your consent?

SIR JOHN.

No. Let them wait till I'm no longer here.

JACOBSON.

[*Pause.*] Do you hate me as much as that?

SIR JOHN.

[*Looking steadily at him.*] I do.

[*Music "Salut d'Amour" stops. After slight pause starts "Barcarolle," from "Contes d'Hoffman."*]

JACOBSON.

Very well. I understand your feelings. I appreciate and share them. But I would willingly have sacrificed mine to insure the happiness of my children. Sir John, good-night. [*Exit.*]

SIR JOHN.

[*Stands looking straight before him. Pause.*] Sir Isaac!
[*Looks around.*] Gone! Well, let him go. [*Sits chair*]

R. of table. *Sudden thought.*] He gave Cecil a thousand pounds when he most needed it. Damned decent of him. [*Pause.*] He lets me owe him six months' rent and not one word. He might have thrown it in my face three days ago, yet he didn't. Why? [*With gradually awakened feelings.*] If only he weren't a Jew. [*His hand falls on book. He takes it up.*] "The Children of the Ghetto"! Damme, I'll read it. [*Thinking.*] Have I been wronging Jews all my life? Have I been wronging him? [*Dismisses the thought.*] But for him what might have happened to my boy? Starved? A failure! [*Pause.*] And to me? Turned into the street! [*Rises. Drops book to floor. Expresses loneliness as he looks around feebly.*] I wish they'd come back. [*Faces portrait.*] Lord Beaconsfield, the greatest Jew of all. Made our laws—upheld the power and dignity of our country. Have I been—I wonder—I wonder— My boy! Ulrica! They love his children and I stand in their way. [*Sits sofa R., feebly.*] And what do I matter after all? A year or two at the most and then — [*Sits; his hand falls limply; he realizes a picture of lonely misery.*] My time has almost come. [*Pause; sudden thought; his hands clench.*] Money gone—estate gone—pride—everything. Just my boy and my girl. [*Enter VINING C., with newspapers which he takes to table L. and arranges. He leaves door open. SIR JOHN rises, goes to R. of table, looks vaguely at VINING, turns despondently, goes to chair by writing-table and leans on it, looking out of window in utter despair; turns, picks up hat and cane from table, turns in door to VINING.*] Vining [*VINING lifts his head and looks at him*], if any one calls, I'm next door!

[*Exit C. VINING stands watching him off till the curtain is down.*]

CURTAIN

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STILES	<i>An old servant of the Aylwards</i>
MILLS	<i>A young footman</i>
LADY JANE AYLWARD	<i>Sister to Richard</i>
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